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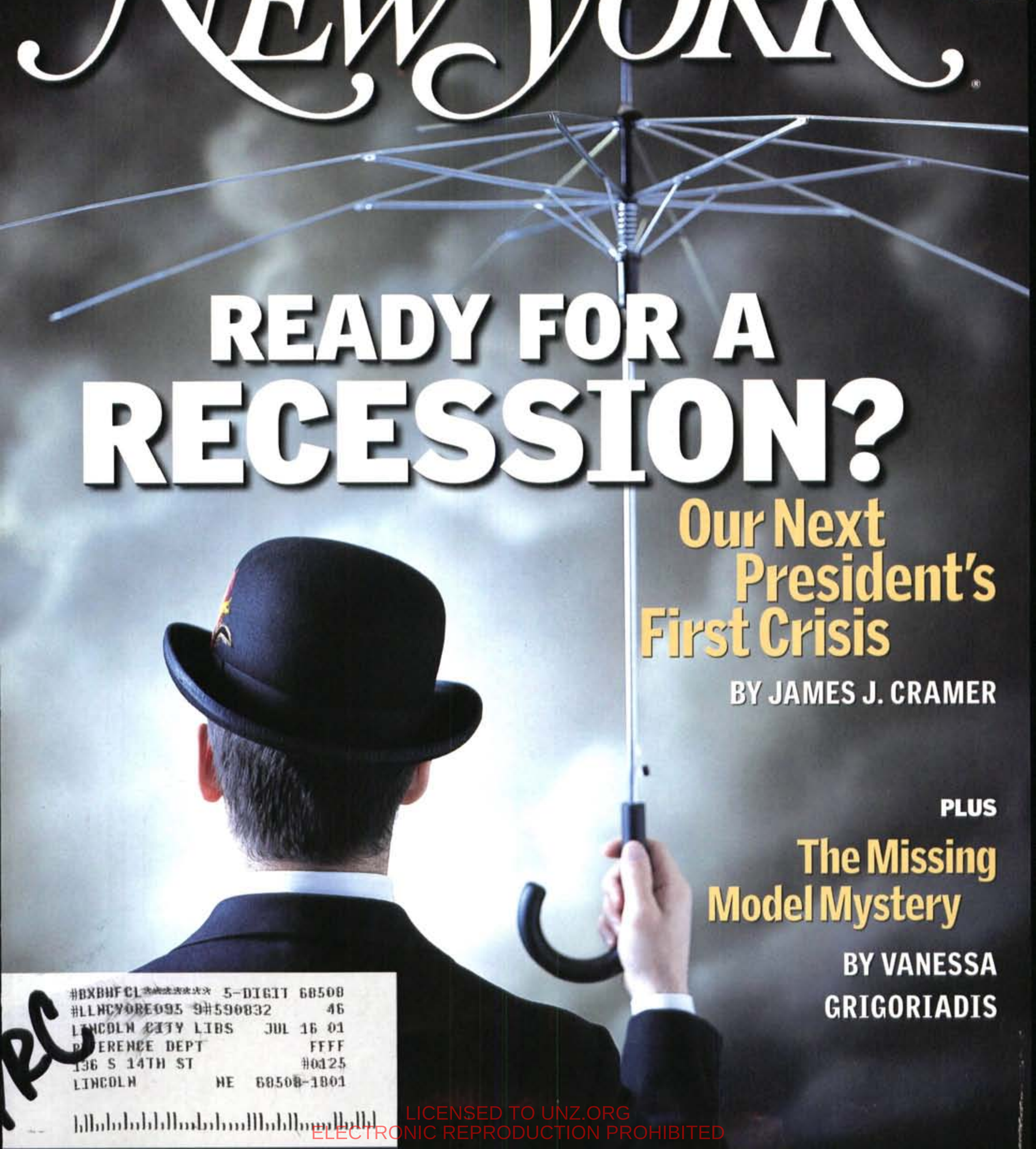

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Our Next President's First Crisis

BY JAMES J. CRAMER

PLUS

The Missing Model Mystery

BY VANESSA GRIGORIADIS

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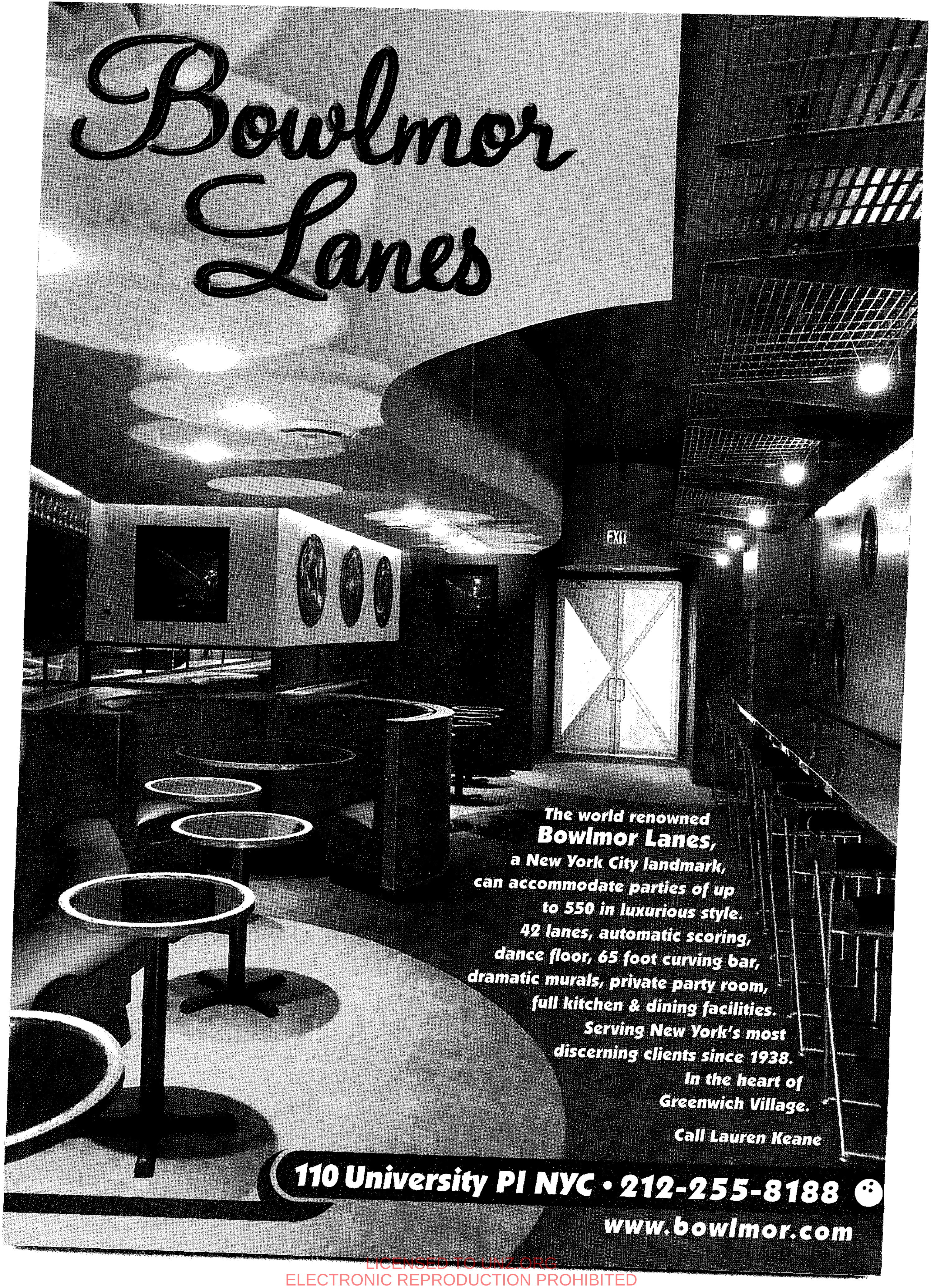

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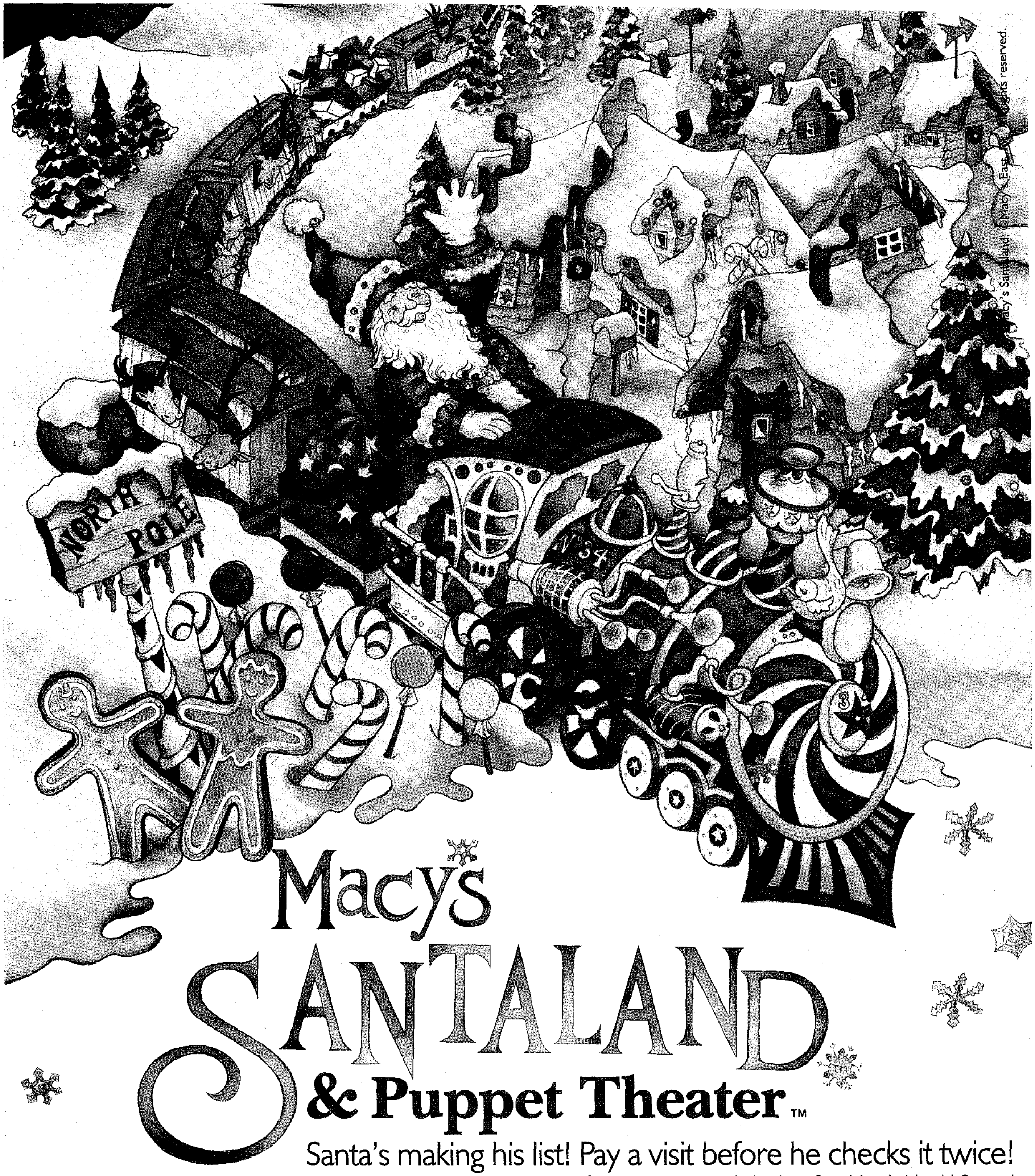
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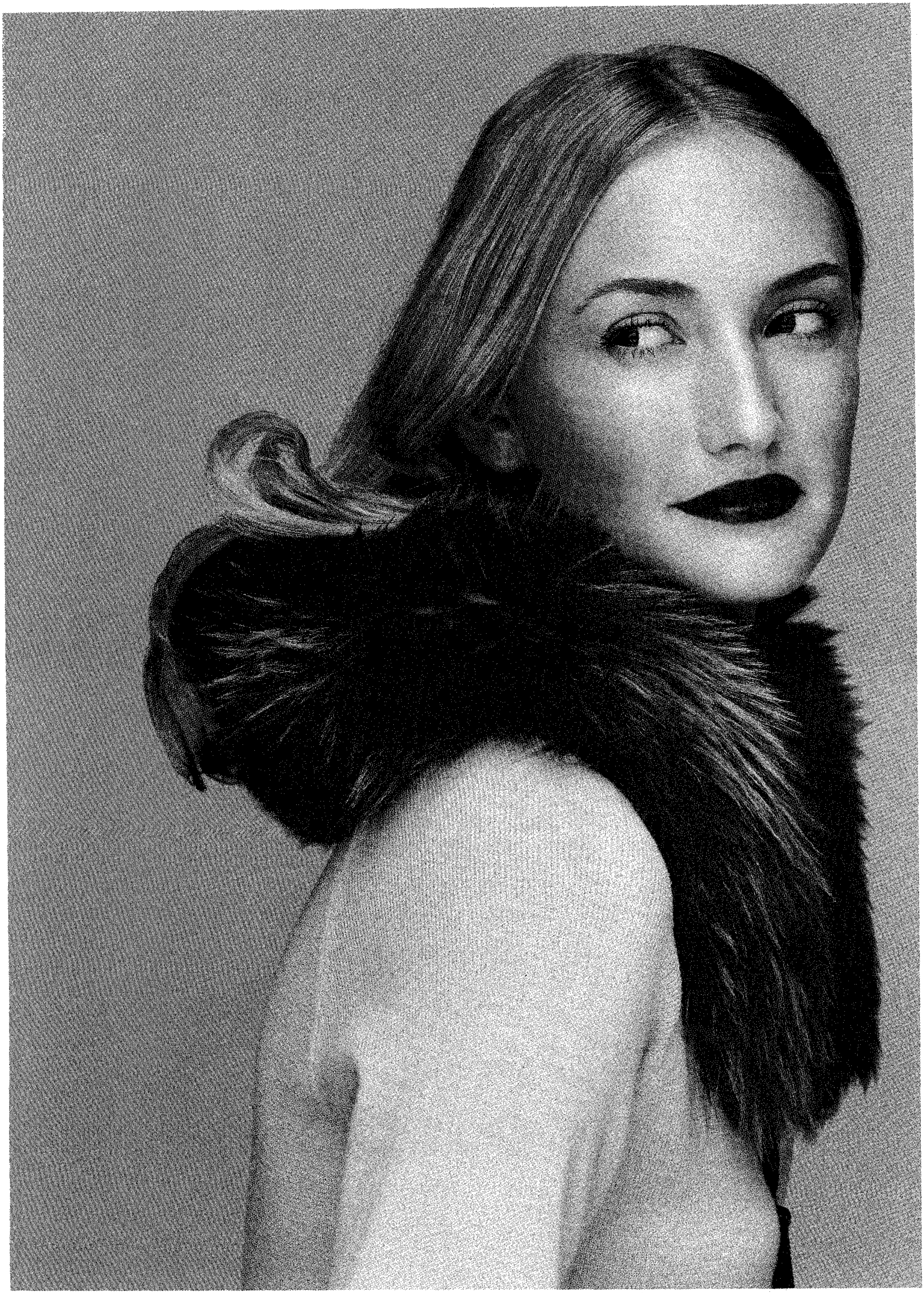

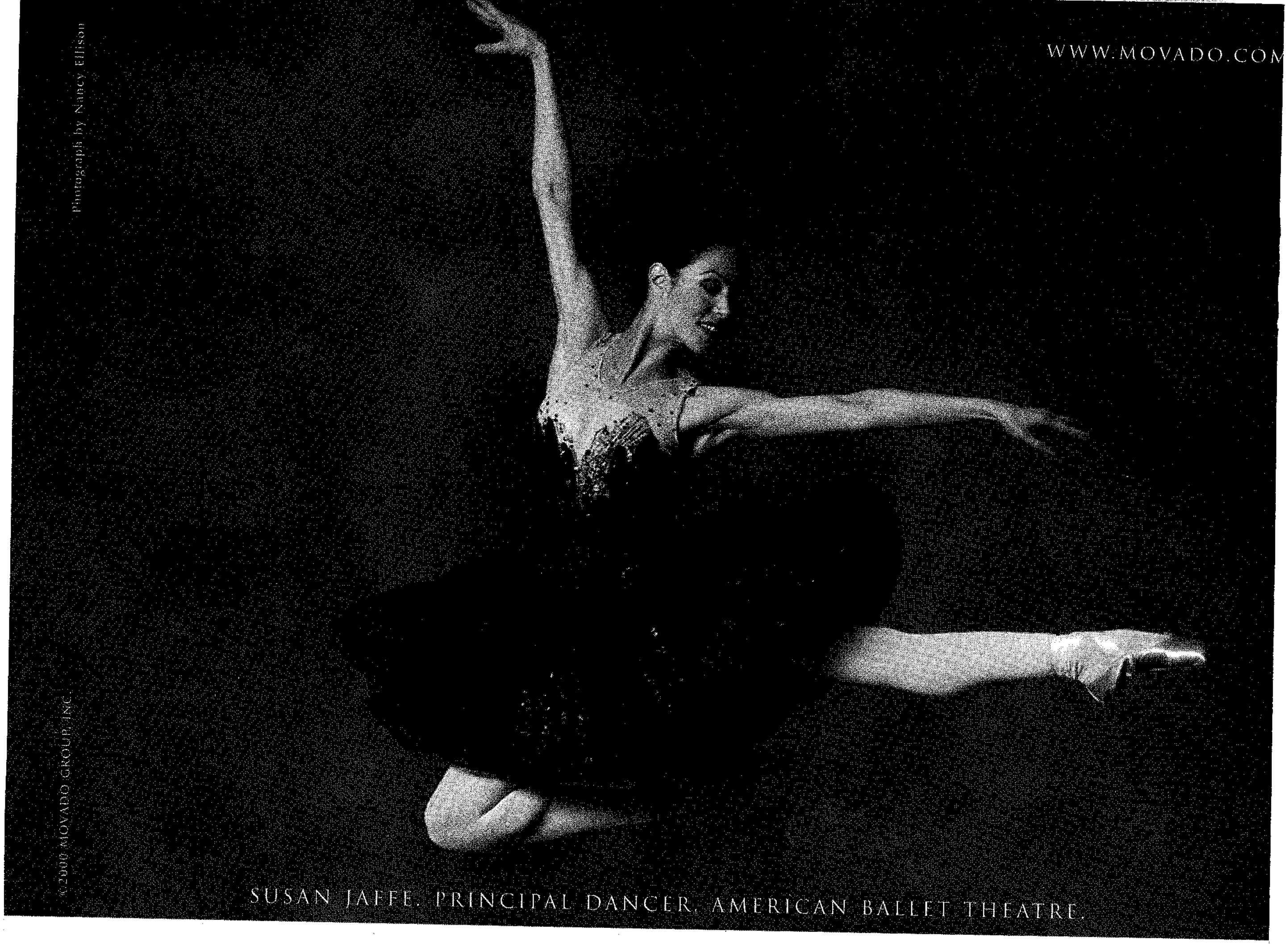

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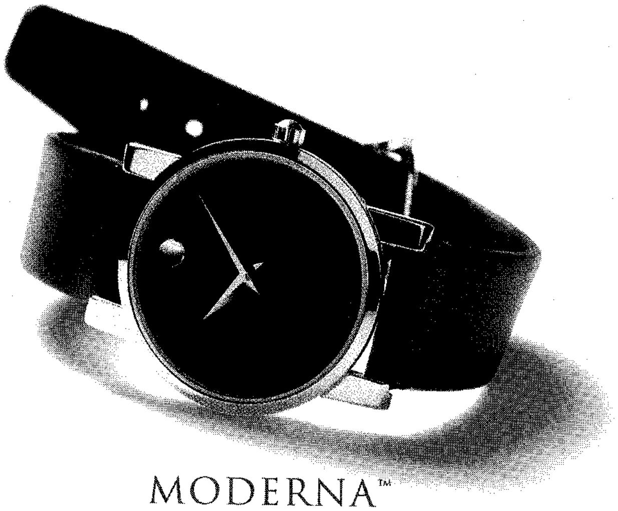
SUSAN JAFFE, PRINCIPAL DANCER, AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE.



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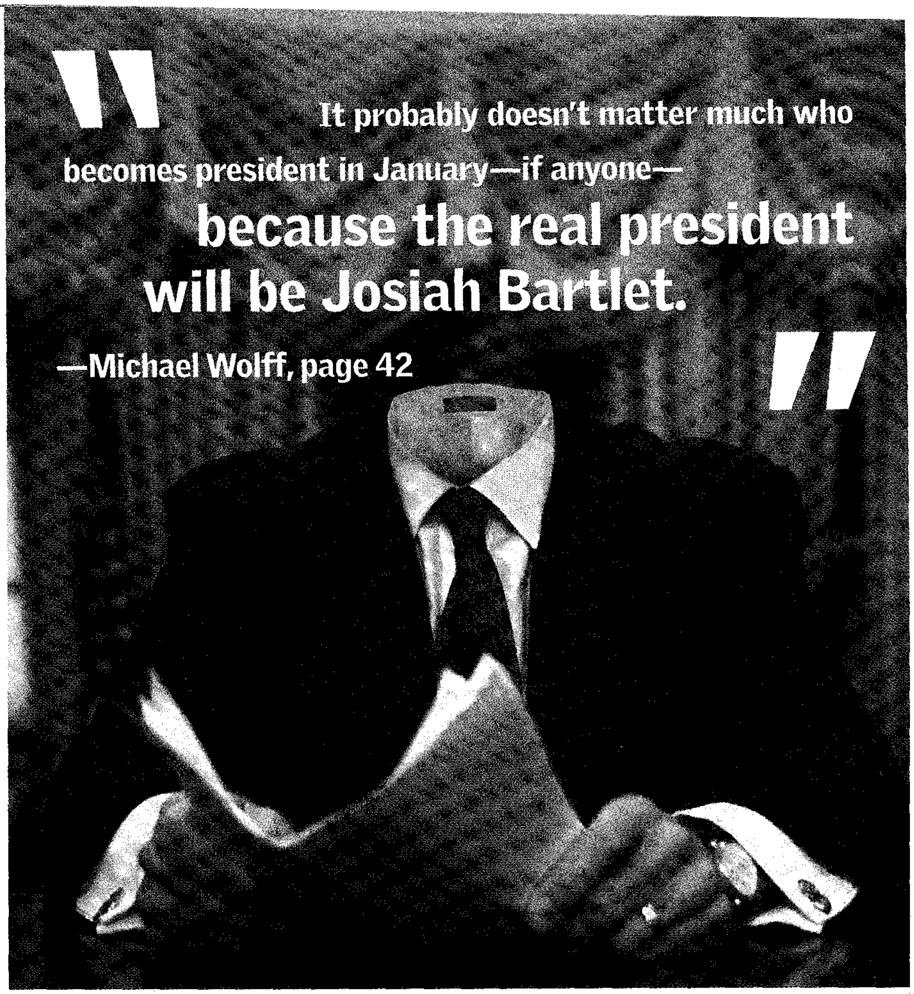


> "It probably doesn't matter much who becomes president in January—if anyone—**because the real president will be Josiah Bartlet.**"
>
> —Michael Wolff, page 42

42 The *Other* Political Drama By Michael Wolff

Think the events in Tallahassee have permanently tarnished American politics—and the presidency a job no sane person could want? Not on *The West Wing,* in which Hollywood has reinvented the White House as a place where good (but flawed) people try (and sometimes even succeed) to do their work—just like an emergency room, say, or a law firm. There's a lesson here—for the politicians *and* the people.

48 The 'R' Word By James J. Cramer

Don't be fooled by those gaudy employment numbers. Consumer spending is soft; earnings are plummeting; the Internet boom seems like a bad joke. And the bonuses that have buoyed the city look to be downright modest this winter (at least by Wall Street standards). Who's to blame? None other than Alan Greenspan, who, disturbed by the market's "irrational exuberance," seems to have prepared us for a hard landing. And whose problem will it swiftly become? Welcome to your first crisis, Mr. President.

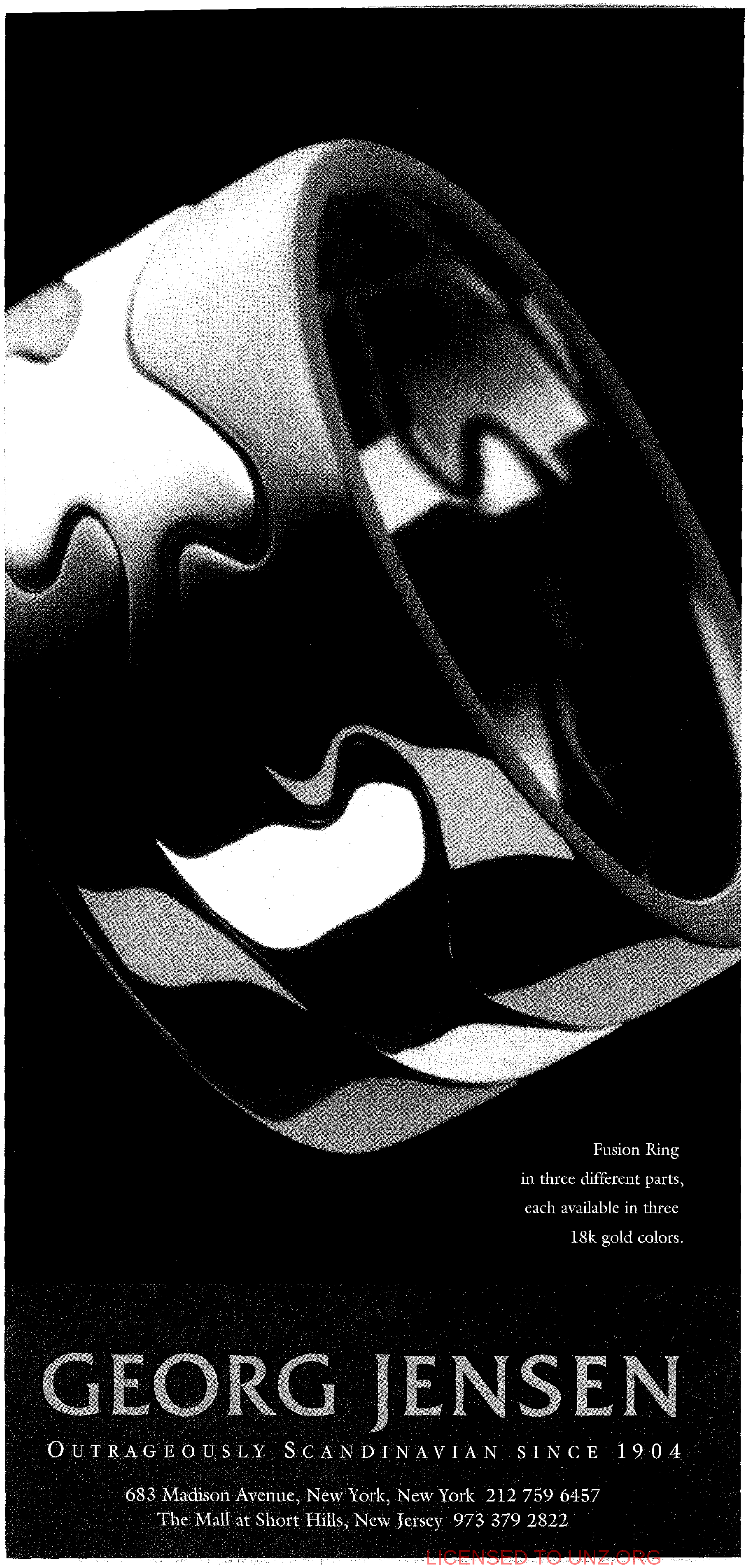
56 Model Mystery By Vanessa Grigoriadis

Lourdes Gruart lived the model life: catwalks in Milan and Paris, clubbing with European playboys, dinners at Indochine, shopping sprees at Bergdorf's. But in the past few years, the party wound down. And when she vanished last month, friends were mystified. And her brother, who had made himself comfortably at home in her apartment, says he's mystified, too.

64 Sharp Shooter

In a new book of photographs, *Sharp,* Nigel Parry proves that celebrity portraiture can be the liveliest of arts.

COVER: PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIAN VELENCHENKO
Photo illustration by Joe Zeff; photograph by AFP/Corbis.



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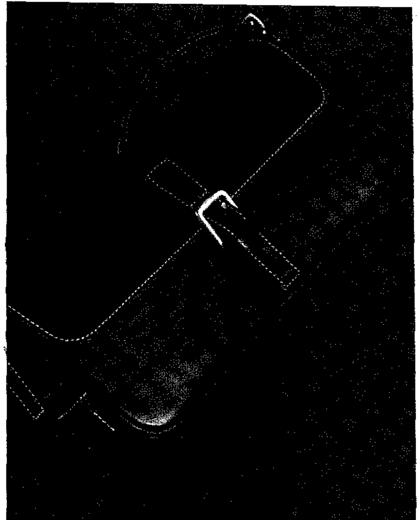

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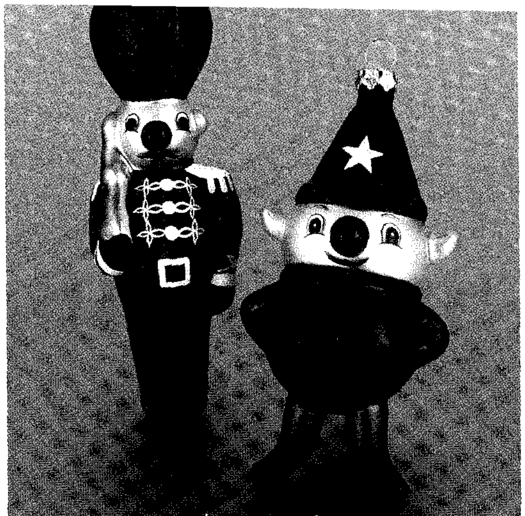

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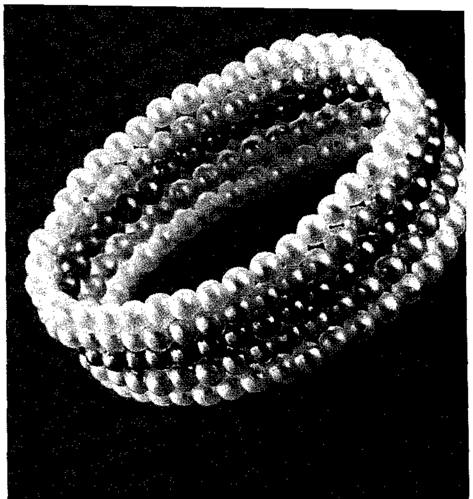

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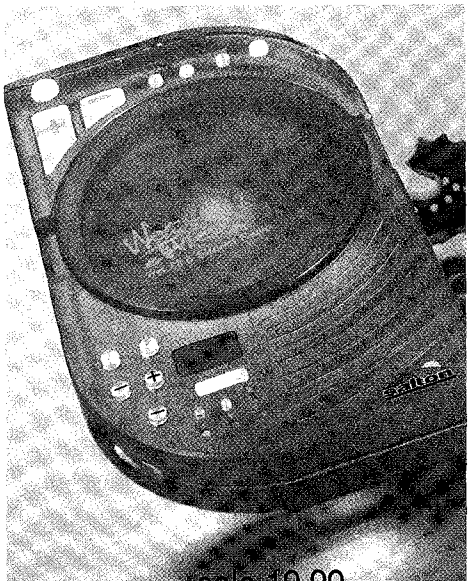

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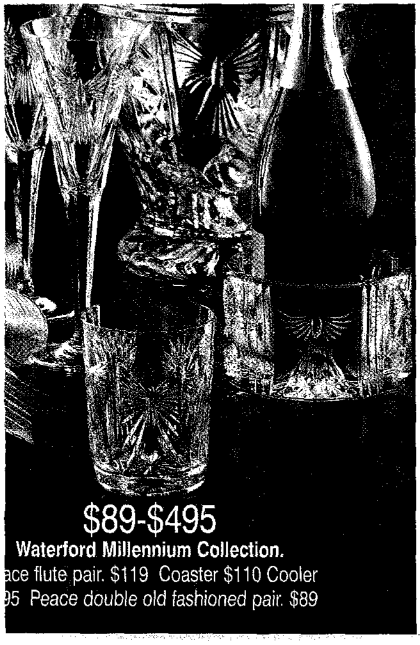

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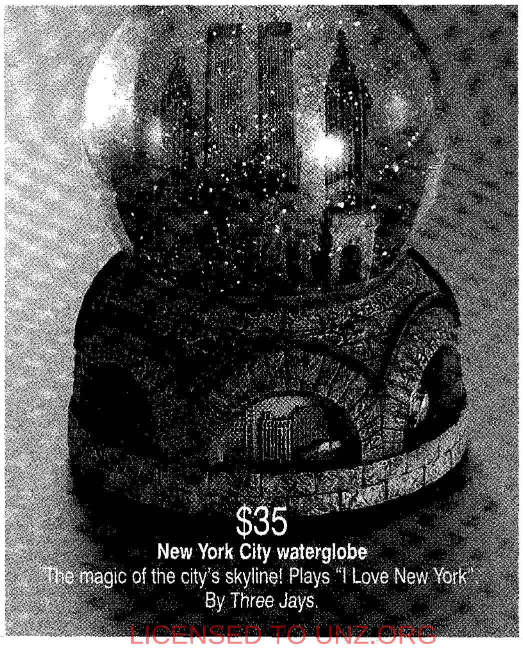

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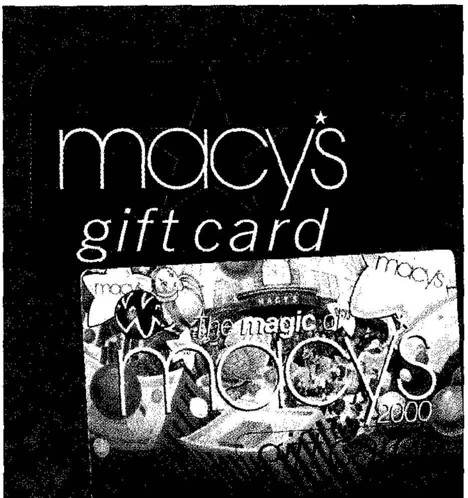

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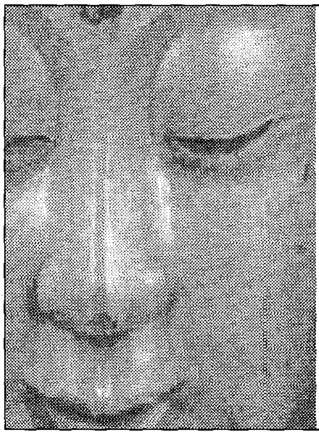

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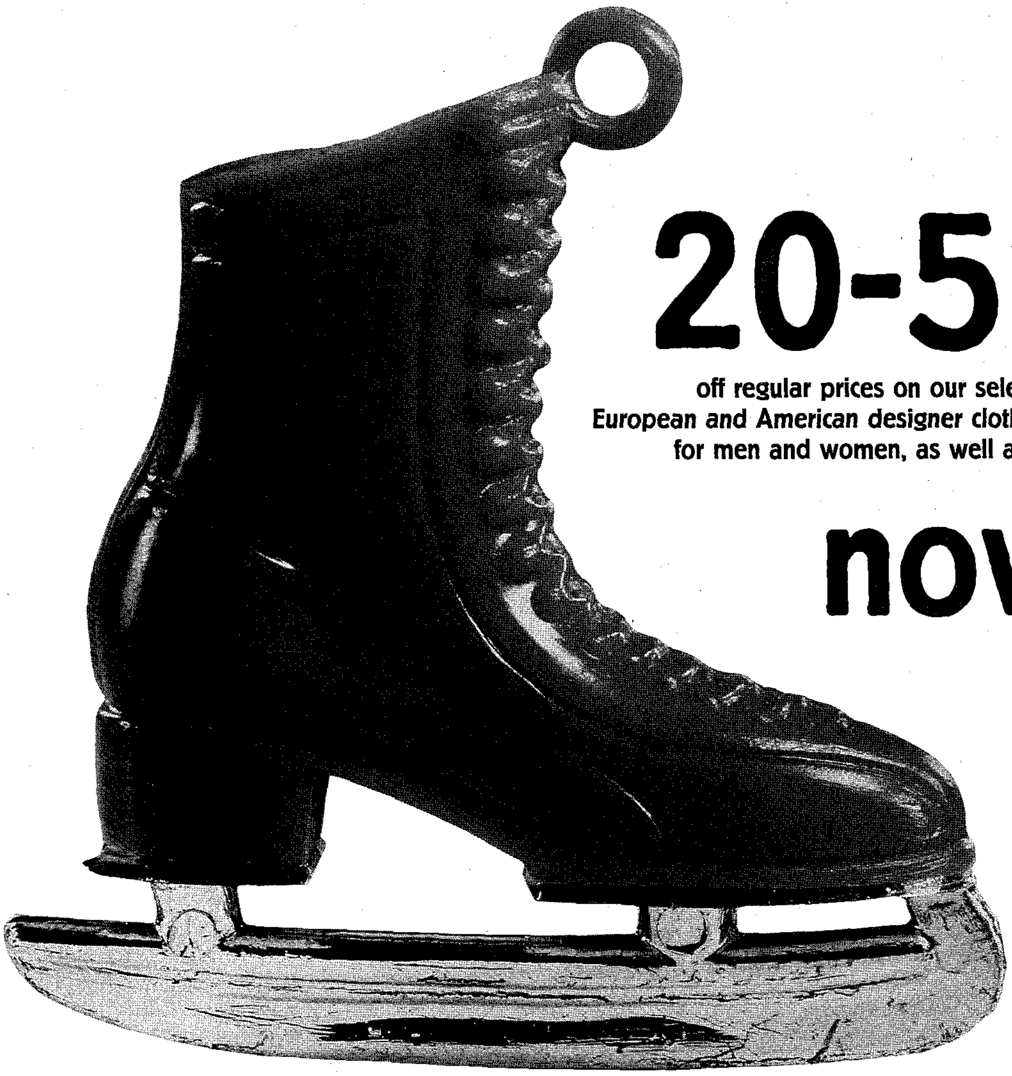

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Letters

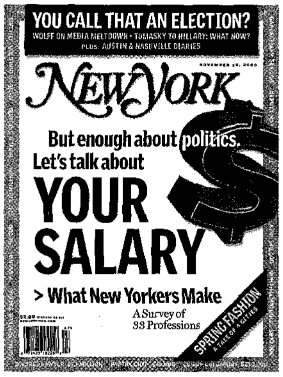
"My 5-year-old daughter recently wondere why Gore and Bush couldn't 'share being president.'"

—Carolyn Clough Kilgus

All Work, Low Pay

In "Salaries in the City" [November 20], a social worker is quoted as saying that the "rewards in being a social worker" offset the low pay, and that he sometimes can't get his staff to go home at night. After twenty years in the field, I suspect that these people are not going home because they're swamped with bureaucratic paperwork. Social-service agencies are staffed with underpaid workers, and as a result, burnout and high turnover are all too common. Meanwhile, those of us who, in order to gain some control over fees and hours, pursue work in private practice have experienced an erosion in earnings at the hands of managed care. The important work we do is not rewarded appropriately in this high-stakes, high-cost town. I hope I live to see the day when our pay reflects the impact we have on the lives of so many people.

Carol Chetrick, MANHATTAN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WOLFF ON MEDIA MELTDOWN · TOMASKY TO HILLARY: WHAT NOW?
PLUS: AUSTIN & NASHVILLE DIARIES
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But enough about politics. Let's talk about YOUR SALARY
> What New Yorkers Make
A Survey of 33 Professions
SPRING FASHION

Your timely review of salaries draws a sharp contrast between New York teachers ("Luckily, shaping young minds is its own reward"), who top out at $70,000, and D.J.'s like Mark Ronson, who makes $7,000 a night. If the city's teachers decide to strike because of a pitiful new contract, we can always send the kids over to Mark's house for tutoring. Parents should get their priorities straight, or their kids won't get the education they deserve. Teachers like to live well, too.

Robert John Keiber, MANHATTAN

I enjoyed "Salaries in the City." I am trying to persuade other elected officials to base a part of their salaries on their performance, as I began doing two years ago. At the start of each year, I post my goals on our town's Website (www.town.greenburgh.ny.us) and have 5 percent of my salary placed in an escrow account. At the end of each year, the Town Council evaluates my performance and reduces my salary depending on the percentage of goals I have met. Elected officials perform a service to the public. When we meet our goals, we should be rewarded. When we don't, the least we can do is give taxpayers some of their money back.

Paul Feiner, GREENBURGH, N.Y. TOWN SUPERVISOR

Child's Play

I was glad to see someone else share my amusement over Al Gore's use of the word *snippy* ["This Media Life: The Losers," by Michael Wolff, November 20]. It is a word that my 5-year-old daughter occasionally uses. She recently wondered why Gore and Bush couldn't "share being president" since it was too close to call. That is about the *only* idea we haven't heard discussed! Maybe "Snippy" and "Wiener" would like to consider it, given the level they have been operating on since Election Day.

Carolyn Clough Kilgus, CARMEL, N.Y.

Perhaps, as Michael Wolff rightly asserts, Mr. Clinton has made us "charm junkies." But isn't that a virtue when ascribed to the individual in the world's most important P.R. position? How else to explain why the masses loved Reagan as he joshed us into debt? I say, Give us a charm-boy or an actor every time!

Steve Weiss, SCOTTSDALE, ARIZ.

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Closet Turncoat

Gwyneth Paltrow may have emceed an Environmental Advocates awards ceremony here recently, but she's no friend of wildlife ["Intelligencer: Gwyneth's Blythe Spirit," November 20]. In fact, she was denounced by PET earlier this year for grumbling abou how annoying it was that, thanks t New York animal-rights activists, sh can't wear her furs here without bein hassled.

Ted Klein, MANHATTAN

Poison Pen

Your November 13 item about Bori Karloff's role in the original productio of Joseph Kesselring's comedy *Arseni & Old Lace* ["Cue: Sisterhood I Scary"] had the master of the macabr playing the wrong guy. Karloff did n play the male lead, Mortimer Brewste the character Alec Baldwin played i the "Voices!" production, but rathe Jonathan Brewster, the prodigal broth er and maimed murderer who preys o Mortimer and their aunts. The fact tha the drunken Dr. Einstein's botche plastic surgery made Jonathan look lik one of Karloff's horror characters wa the running joke in the original sho

Bill Iddings, MUSKEGON, MICH.

CORRECTION In "Holiday Gifts: Th Twelve Months of Christmas," by Ann Rachmansky, November 27, the wron phone number was listed for Surround ings. It should have read 212-580-898 In "Just Say Snow," by Toby Cecchini, o page 61 of the same issue, a photo cap tion was omitted. It should have read: E gonomically designed Nike PSA 120 MP player is $299 at Niketown (6 East 57t Street; 212-891-6543). ■

Photograph by Alec Michael/Globe Photo

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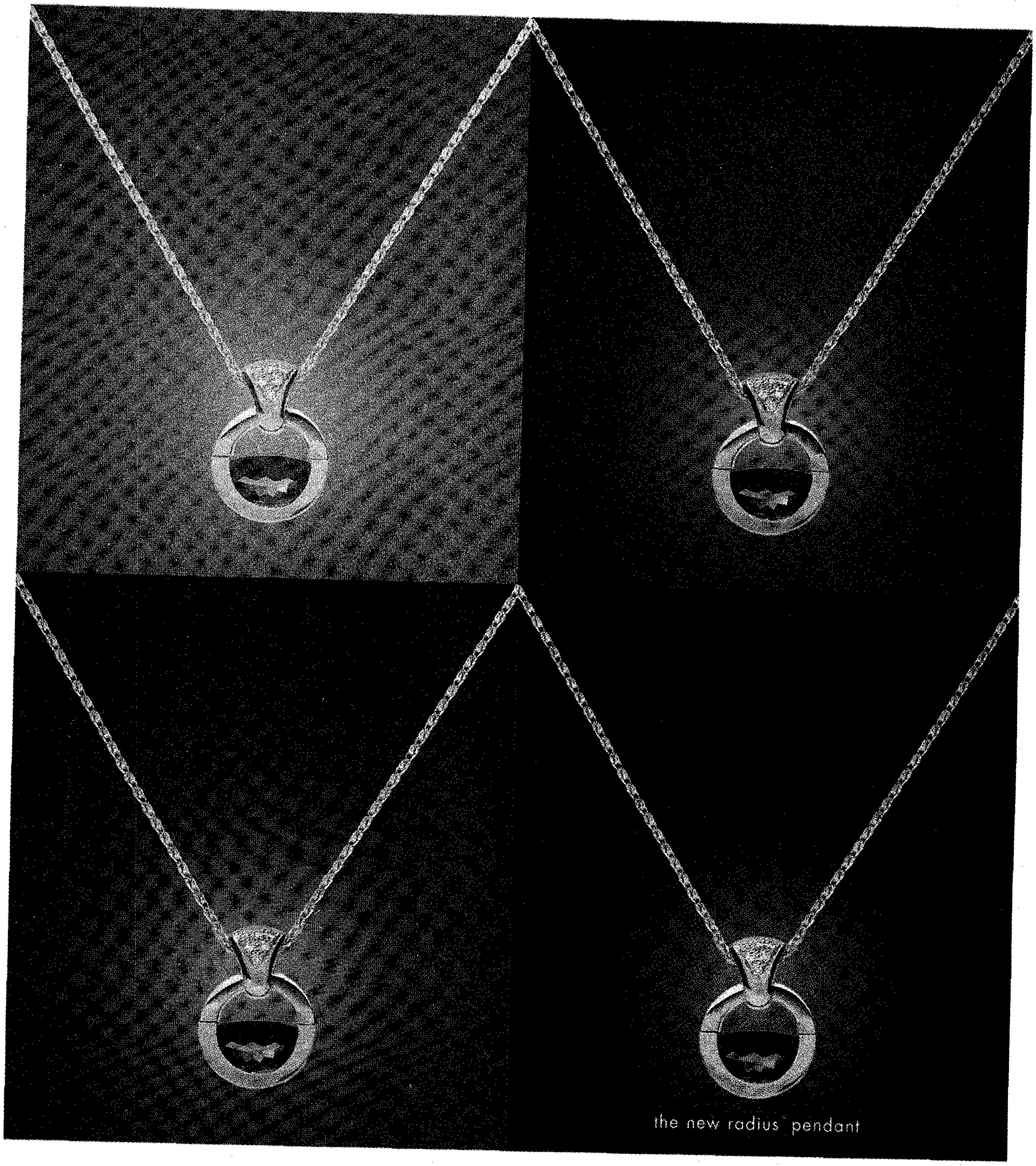

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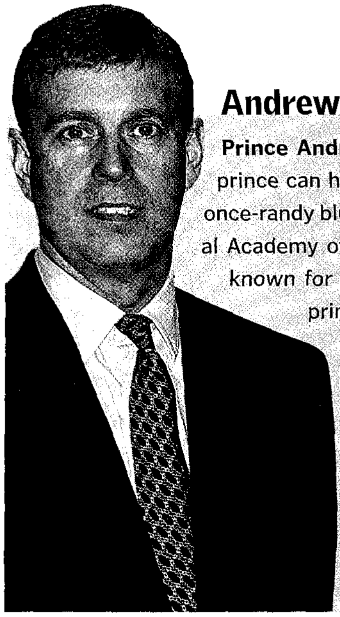
Intelligencer

By Beth Landman Keil and Ian Spiegelman



Andrew Gives *Times* Photog the Royal Treatment

Prince Andrew may maintain a squeaky-clean image, but sometimes even a prince can have a less-than-photogenic day. On a recent visit to New York, the once-randy blue blood attended an event at the Rainbow Room hosted by the Royal Academy of Arts. When famously courteous photographer **Bill Cunningham**, known for his work in the New York *Times'* Style section, tried to snap the prince's picture, Andrew's behavior turned less than princely, according to an academy insider. "He was really rude to Bill, very brusquely demanding privacy at this not-so-private event and complaining about being photographed." According to the source, the academy, royal or not, delights in Cunningham's coverage and was so concerned with his treatment that it quickly penned an apology to him. Though an academy spokesperson denied knowledge of the incident, Cunningham confirms that he got a note, but said it was "because I came too late for the photo op and thus wasn't able to get Prince Andrew's picture."

Shelby Bryan: Hassled by the Man

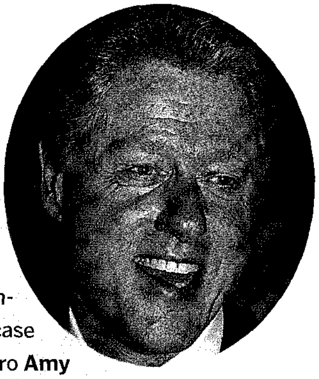
Anna Wintour might want to pick up the check next time she dines out with boyfriend **J. Shelby Bryan**. The telecom tycoon, who recently resigned as CEO of ICG Communications, owes more than eight grand in back property taxes. According to an announcement for the 1999–2000 Suffolk County tax-lien sale published by treasurer **John C. Cochrane** in the East Hampton *Star* last week, Bryan neglected to pay his tax last year. If he fails to pony up the $8,364.16 by December 14, the treasurer's office told us, a lien will be taken against Bryan's home on Lily Pond Lane—where he has such swank neighbors as **Martha Stewart**. This unfortunate turn comes just days after Bryan's company was forced to file for bankruptcy, even as the mogul was negotiating his divorce from his wife, **Katherine**. A spokesman for Bryan says simply, "Those taxes have already been paid." The treasurer's office, however, sticks to its numbers, adding that a charge of 10 percent has already been applied to Bryan's debt and that another point will be tacked on if Bryan doesn't pay by December 30.

Literati Gripe, Grin at Awards Ceremony

As part of our ongoing attempt to fulfill our cultural mission, we breezed by the National Book Awards at the Marriott Marquis and asked some of the finalists about the meaning of literary awards. Fiction-prize hopeful **Alan Lightman**—whose novel *The Diagnosis* was beaten out by **Susan Sontag**'s *In America*—said he was glad that the winners would be announced before dinner this year instead of after, because "at least we can eat dinner and not puke on the table." Even before nabbing the award for young people's literature, *Homeless Bird* author **Gloria Whelan** was doing her damnedest to remain gracious: "It's been so much fun that I can almost, *almost* say I'd be just as happy for any of the others. Almost. I can't quite get it all the way out." One person who really understood what being a writer is all about was the evening's emcee, **Steve Martin**, who told the audience that since publishing his first novel, "I get seated at restaurants with people who haven't picked up a check in twenty years."

Brokaw's New Mirror Image

Tom Brokaw has found the spot for his dream house, but there's a little thing standing in his way. According to real-estate insiders, the NBC "Nightly News" anchor has been trying to buy a large parcel of waterfront property on prestigious Mirror Lake in

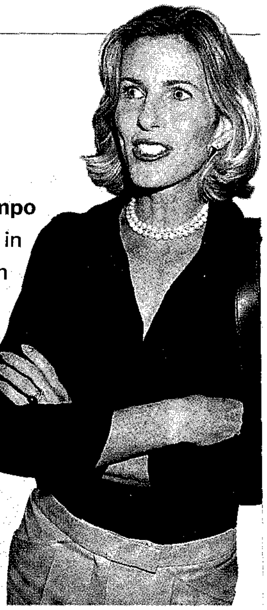


Clinton Teaches Swinging at Night

Bill Clinton isn't merely the most entertaining president we've had. He's also the ultimate golfing pal. Legendary record producer **Jimmy Jam** tells us he got to know the casual Clinton—is there any other?—when the two played eighteen holes at Hillcrest in Los Angeles recently. "He's the perfect little golf buddy," says Jam. "If you hit a bad shot, he'd put another one down and say, 'Let me show you what you did wrong.' " And in case the president's advice wasn't good enough, they brought along former pro **Amy Alcott**, since "he likes to learn while he's playing," Jam says. Since Jam had taken the day off from working on **Janet Jackson**'s next album—which he hopes to complete by March—he took the opportunity to get a presidential message to the pop star through an e-mail pager: "He said, 'I love her! Tell her I'd love to meet her sometime.' " Always the avid player, Clinton was not distracted from his game when evening crept in. "By the time we got to the eighteenth hole," says Jam, "the Secret Service guys had their flashlights out and we'd just hit our balls and say, 'Sounds good.' " Even under those circumstances, Clinton emerged victorious.

Photographs by Andrea Renault/Globe Photos.

All the Art That's Fit to Print



Is it a coincidence that two of the subjects profiled by **Brooke de Ocampo** (pictured) in her new book, *Bright Young Things*, have the same artwork in their New York apartments? Upon close inspection, it appears that both **Nicolas Berggruen** and **Karen** and **Ferdinand Groos** have identical Jean-Michel Basquiat paintings. The one in Berggruen's bachelor pad is not identified because it is in the background, and the Groos's version is credited as simply "a painting by Jean-Michel Basquiat." So, is one the original and one a print, or are they the same? A rep at Assouline, the book's publisher, asked if we were insinuating that the art was placed there specifically to perk up the apartments for the photo shoots. She said it, we didn't. She then went on to point out that one is framed and one is not, and that these two parties are "victims of liking the same art." And that's the worst kind of victim to be.

the Adirondacks, which used to be summer home to such upscale clans as the Whitneys. Unfortunately, there's a small home with a five-year, $150,000 lease sitting on the land, and try as he might, the newsman doesn't seem to be able to make a deal with the renters. "It's really odd, because the deal is worth millions, and here's this relatively minor sum, but it's holding everything up," says the source. When the firm responsible for the small lease was contacted, representatives told us that they had indeed "heard" that Brokaw was looking in the area. They also added that "Tom Brokaw is just another name to us up here." The vast property he covets is currently owned by **Art Lussi**, who lent it to the **Clintons** when they visited the area. Perhaps Brokaw should appeal to **Hillary** to get those pesky tenants off his spread.

A Tangled Web for Jennifer Grey

After suffering the ups and downs of fame, **Jennifer Grey** is certainly a trouper—but she leaves the truly grueling work to others. At the premiere of Miramax's *Bounce*, the lovely Grey told us about a particularly harrowing shot in her upcoming flick *Revelation*, co-starring **Tim Curry**. "I have a scene where I'm tied to a divan and this Rasta guy is pulling up my shirt, dumping a shoebox full of spiders all over my stomach," she said. "These were real spiders. They were brought in from some special place where they had supposedly been devenomized." After Grey finished describing her "horrific" experience, we asked what had gone through her mind at the time—and then the truth came out. She laughed, confessing, "I was thinking, 'Thank God I have a body double!' They put plastic spiders on me just in case the real ones hadn't been fully de-venomized." The prop mistress, however, got the real thing. "She *wanted* to do it," Grey insisted. And how did the lucky woman land that gig? "I had to find someone whose stomach was close to mine, so I auditioned everyone," said Grey. Surely, the thrill of a lifetime.

Carlisle: Still Got the Beat

Plenty has happened to her since standing atop a waterskiing pyramid in the Go-Go's "Vacation" video, but just when you thought you'd seen the last of **Belinda Carlisle**, you'll be seeing a lot more of her. A music-industry source tells us that Carlisle shot a spread for *Playboy* last week. Although Carlisle's rep refused to confirm the story, the rep did crow that the magazine has been "after her for years." *Playboy* is in denial as well, saying that it does not comment on upcoming pictorials, though it did fess up to talks with Carlisle about lending her body to the mag. You go-go, girl.

O-Town: Slippery When Wet

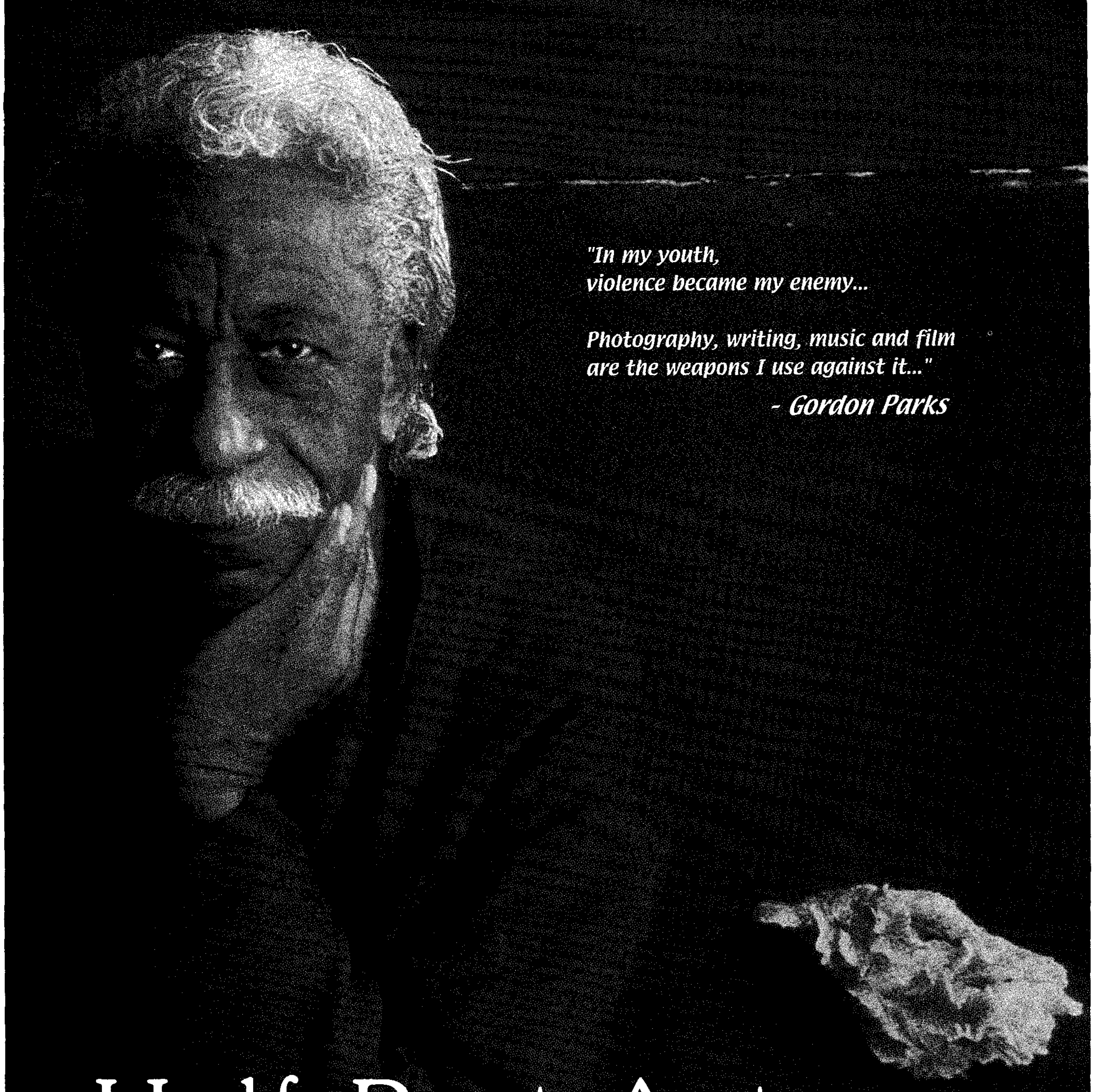
It wouldn't be the holiday season without some shenanigans from all those precious boy bands. First, havoc struck the set of O-Town's first music video last week. The boys from **Clive Davis**'s new label, J Records, were filming a dance scene for the video of their single "Liquid Dreams"—which is set to air on ABC and MTV this week—when a technical snafu caused the set to flood with water. According to a source close to the band, the boys and their comely dancers suddenly found themselves up to their waists in the drink and filming had to be stopped. "The dancers were falling on their asses," said the source. "It also became a little too sexy—it was the ultimate wet T-shirt contest." Meanwhile, the Backstreet Boys were breaking hearts at the LIFEbeat World AIDS Day 2000 concert at the Beacon—by failing to show up. The band was slated to be the surprise guest of the evening, assisting **Carson Daly** with the heady task of introducing 98 Degrees to the screaming fans. But they canceled out at the last moment to attend their own record-release party. So where was 'N Sync in all this?

HAMPTON EX FILES: This summer looks to be a particularly heated one in Montauk, and we haven't even consulted our almanacs. According to real-estate sources, **Sandy Brant** has just purchased a 120-year-old Stanford White house from **Dick Cavett** for close to $5 million. Enterainingly, it sits just doors away from **Paul Morrisey**'s home, which Sandy's ex-husband **Peter Brant** happens to rent each summer with his professionally stunning second wife, Victoria's Secret model **Stephanie Seymour**. Should make for interesting mornings at the Farmer's Market.

Additional reporting by Paige Herman and Abbey Goodman.

Photographs: top, Rose Hartman/Globe Photos; bottom, Robin Platzer/Twin Images

AN HBO DOCUMENTARY PRESENTATION



"In my youth,
violence became my enemy...

Photography, writing, music and film
are the weapons I use against it..."
- Gordon Parks

Half Past Autumn

The Life and Works of Gordon Parks

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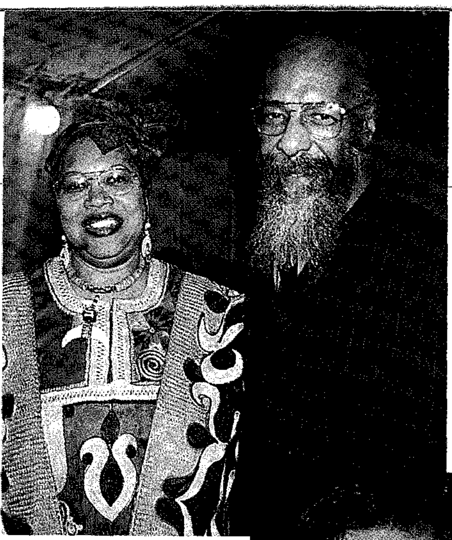
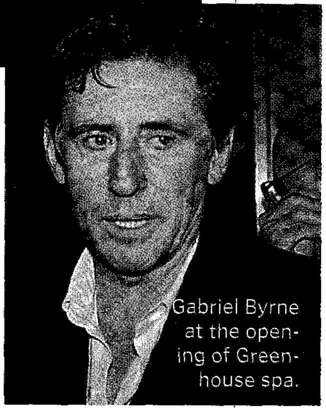
Scene

Ross Bleckner, Eric Fischl, Bianca Jagger, and Bryan Hunt at Bottino celebrating Fischl's show at Mary Boone.



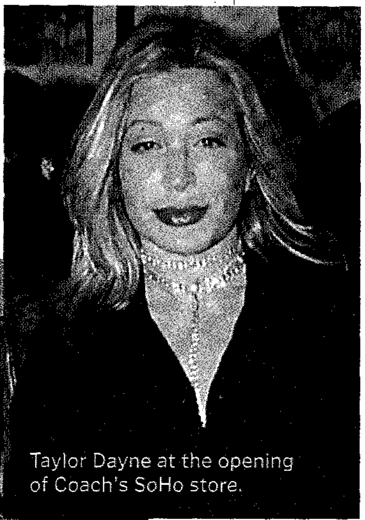
Mable Robertson and Richie Havens at the Brooklyn Public Library Gala at the Main Library.



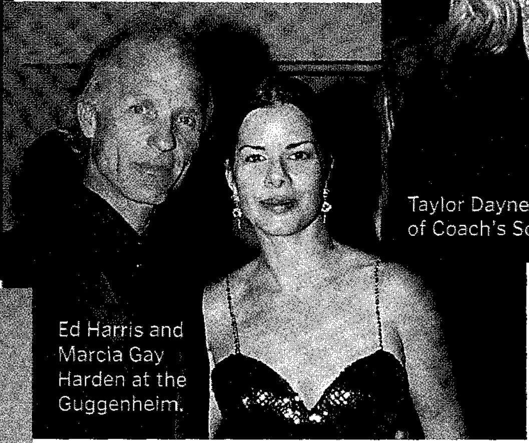
Gabriel Byrne at the opening of Greenhouse spa.

Julian Schnabel and Michel Comte at Milk Studios toasting Comte's book *People and Places With No Name* and the launch of *4* magazine.

Audrey Gruss and Geoffrey Rush at Le Cirque 2000 for the premiere of *Quills*.



Taylor Dayne at the opening of Coach's SoHo store.



Ed Harris and Marcia Gay Harden at the Guggenheim.

Jessye Norman at the Citymeals-on-Wheels Power Lunch for Women at the Pierre.

Peter Brant, Stephanie Seymour, Kayce Freed, and Peter Jennings at Pier 59.

Bidding Good Night

"I can*not* believe he made it!" exclaimed
pinstriped **Peter Brant** on November 1
Neither could anyone else: **Peter Jenning**
had managed to sneak away from th
electoral fracas to host the Artwal
Gala Auction at Pier 59, wher
moneyed swells snacked o
pheasant spring rolls, sipped Tai
tinger, and doled out cash fc
Clementes and Mapplethorpes t
support the Coalition for th
Homeless. "Peter's the heart an
soul of this event," confided execu
tive director **Mary Brosnahan**, a
Jennings worked the aisles wit
enough zeal to entice **Stephani**
Seymour into a bidding war for
religious-themed Warhol oil (sh
stopped at $55,000; it wen
for $56,000). "I love anythin
with Christs and crosses," sh
explained afterward. The
why'd she pull out? "Because
she replied coolly, "we hav
several very similar at home."

DAVID AMSDE

Bio Chemistry

"I learned to paint, but I felt
didn't have anything to say
said **Marcia Gay Harden** as sh
emerged, sleek and blinking
from a screening of *Polloc*
(she plays Lee Krasner) to a
explosive pop of flashbulbs a
the Guggenheim's benefit fo
its Film and Media Arts de
partment on November 20. **E**
Harris, who spent the past ten years work
ing on the film he stars in and direct
looked a bit like a new father. "I couldn
watch," he admitted. "I started to, but the
I had to leave. I caught the end from up
stairs." **Bud Cort**, who plays art criti
Howard Putzel in the film, wandere
around the room. "You're a fantastic ac
tress!" he told **Angie Harmon**, wh
thanked him brightly while her boyfrienc
Jason Seahorn, looked proud. But ther
was no returned compliment. "I had t
gain a hundred pounds for the movie
sighed slim-again Cort. "And I guess n
one recognizes me."

AMY LAROCC

Photographs by Patrick McMullan

ST. JOHN SPORT
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Kelly Gray in Las Vegas, Nevada.

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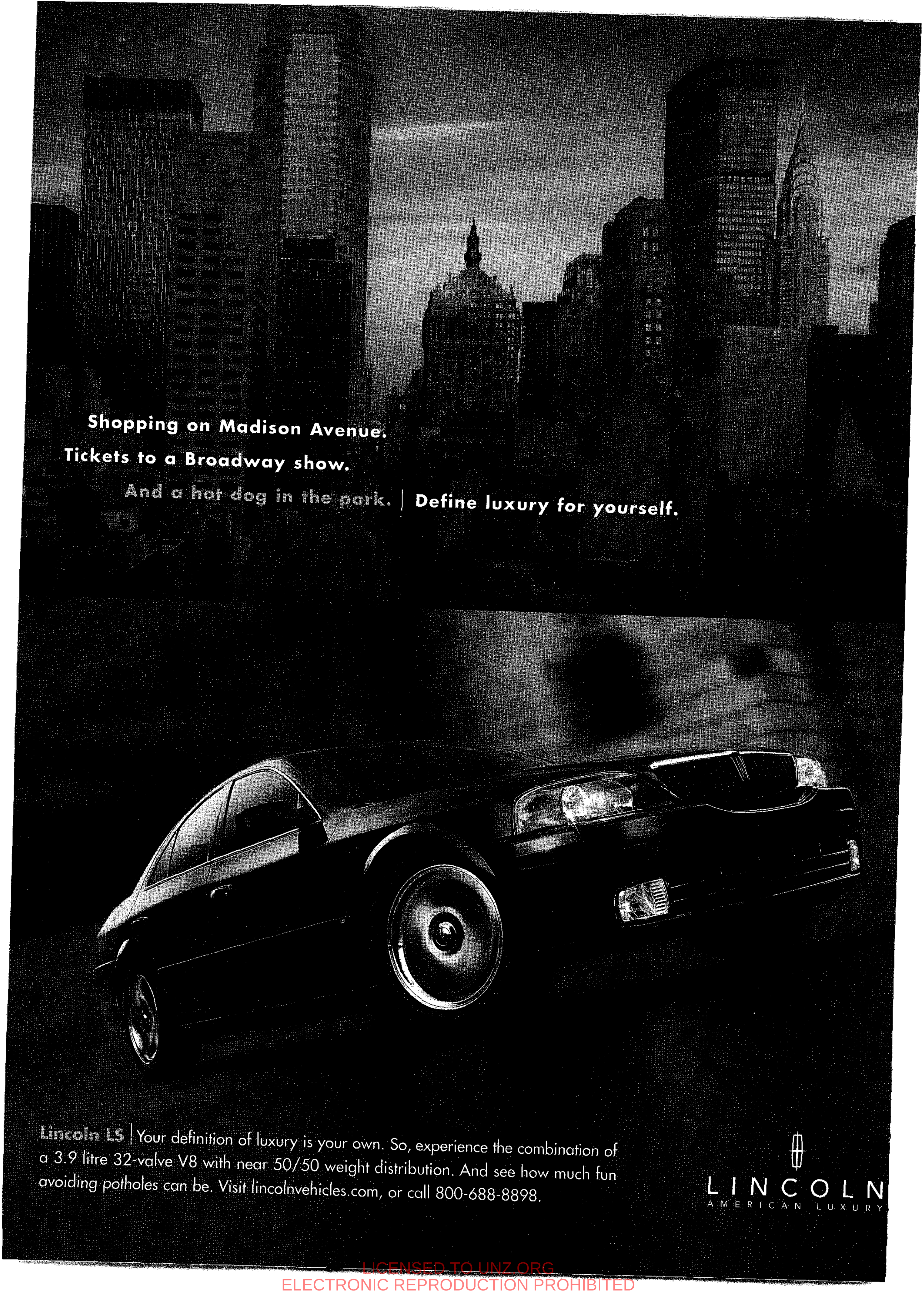
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The province of Let's Pretend located in the State of Anomie—**Gail Sheehy**

GOTHAM

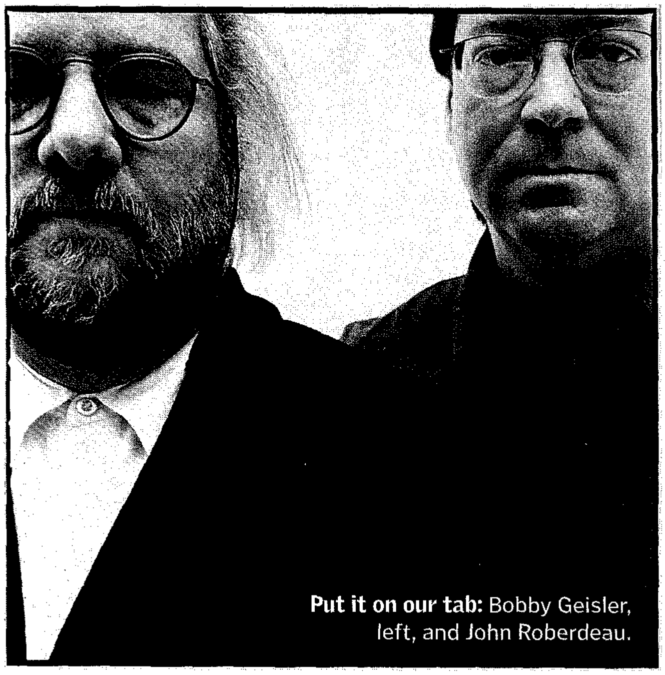
Edited by Jessica Lustig

Revolving Credit

The producers who scored with *The Thin Red Line* have stiffed New York's top law firms. They're bruised, bankrupt—and bent on a comeback. By Robert Kolker

In a business as bottom-line conscious as it is dismissive of failure, high-flying Manhattan producers Bobby Geisler and John Roberdeau have made more friends by not making movies than they have by actually making them. Their epic struggle to get Terrence Malick to direct *The Thin Red Line* began with years of wooing and coddling the hermetic director and ended with their being told not to come to the 1999 Academy Awards, accused of smothering the auteur and racking up wild debts.

Their opponents call them old-fashioned grifters, latter-day versions of Zero Mostel and Gene Wilder in *The Producers.* Until a New York State Supreme Court judge ruled earlier this year that they had bilked a major investor, they practiced Xtreme producing, using southern charm and other people's money to make a name in the indie scene—throwing well-catered parties and glacially developing prestige pictures that, for the most part, never got made.


Put it on our tab: Bobby Geisler, left, and John Roberdeau.

But now, in bankruptcy court in Texas (where their biggest creditors—their families—reside), the list of Geisler and Roberdeau's unpaid benefactors is growing. The white-shoe Manhattan firms Frankfurt, Garbus, Klein & Selz and Kaye, Scholer, Fierman, Hays & Handler are owed $300,000 and $150,000, respectively. The biggest fall guy appears to be Gerard Rubin, a chemical-company executive who paid them more than $6 million. Rubin's lawyer, Barry Goldin, has called the pair "economic sociopaths." Geisler calls Rubin a turncoat who stopped his bankrolling at just the wrong time, causing "many financial dominoes to fall for me and John." Neither Geisler nor Roberdeau has filed a tax return in seven years. "I *have* paid a lot of money in legal fees over the years," says an indignant Geisler, "most of it unjustly because of this mess. We've made some mistakes. Survival isn't easy. Sometimes it involves cannibalism."

And yet, as they appeal the Rubin case, mount two separate lawsuits

>

Talking Points

A Frank Answer

Will New York ever get one of those pleasantly morphy Frank Gehry buildings? Since the star architect bailed on the New York *Times* headquarters job, two possibilities remain: the pier-top Guggenheim near Wall Street—a spot that may become home to a cruise-ship hotel instead—and Harry Macklowe's proposed apartment tower at Second Avenue and 53rd Street. In town recently to receive a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Cooper-Hewitt, Gehry confirmed that he'd told the scrappy developer, who isn't known for his aesthetic cred, how much it would cost—and that he hasn't heard back since. "Go ask Harry what happened," Gehry grumbled.

Poorhampton

East Hampton, where even tract homes sell to Manhattan strivers for $500,000, recently decided to condemn some land to build affordable housing for the "year-round population." That is, the unwashed middle class. The only problem: When the town tried to do that between 1986 and 1990, with a project called Whalebone Woods, so many of the buyers added swimming pools,

Photographs: left, Nigel Parry/Cpi; right, courtesy of Frank Gehry and Associates.

Talking Points

extra rooms, and landscaping that the affordable housing ceased to be affordable. "We sold them for $90,000 each, and the minute the people walk in, it's worth $180,000," says the town's assistant housing director, Tom Ruhle. No doubt Ira Rennert is glad he bought before the boom.

Green vs. Green?

Is it time for a carpetbagger again already? Early reports on next year's mayoral campaign show an astonishing lack of support for . . . anyone. A Quinnipiac poll last week put front-runner Mark Green at only 25 percent, exactly the same as the undecided vote. Michael Bloomberg, the top Republican, is barely on the radar. Could an outsider jump in, declare the other candidates indistinguishable, wreak a little havoc? "Well, I don't think Mr. Nader lives in New York," offers his assistant campaign manager, Monica Wilson, delicately. *Yeah, but neither did Hillary.* "Ummm. Well. Hmmm," she says. "I, uh, don't *think* that's what he has in mind."

Culture Vultures

Those 24 nearly blank billboards scattered about the city, each showing a bleak photo of a flying bird, are merely the latest attempt by the public-art association

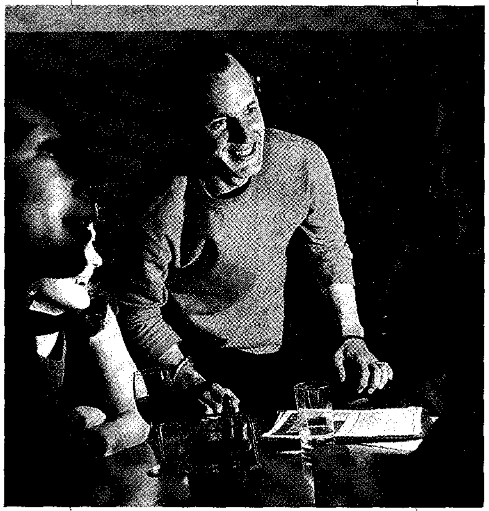
Marketing

DKNY Votes for the Bush

'New York has the same electric energy I find in Tanzania," says James Stephenson, sipping a glass of water at Half King as the first guests arrive to hear him read from *The Language of the Land*, a chronicle of his escapades with the Hadzabe tribe in East Africa. For a guy who spent half the year in the bush, Stephenson is surprisingly well turned out. That's because his black pants and Velcro-strap sneakers (which he's accessorized with a necklace "made of branches with medicine inside") are a gift from DKNY Jeans.

The company, which has been hosting readings with literati like Candace Bushnell, is "sponsoring" Stephenson—outfitting him for appearances, throwing him a book party stocked with celebrities at Laparue on December 6, and potentially footing the bill for a book tour not offered by his publisher, St. Martin's Press. "They also sent over a shirt," he adds. "But it was a little tight."

Stephenson may look like a male model, but it was his sister, Mary Alice, *Marie Claire*'s fashion director, who brokered the deal. "He's exactly the type of person we're interested in supporting," says DKNY's Kristin Kavanagh. "The head of the company's interested in the same things: other cultures, yoga." "The fashion world has helped him more than the literary world," confirms Mary Alice, tucked into a booth with Lucy Sykes, *Marie Claire*'s senior fashion editor. Tonight's gig, arranged by fashion publicist Marni Salup is shrewdly located at the bar owned by that *other* adventure-writing hunk, Sebastian Junger, and the strategy's working: *Good Morning America* is checking Stephenson out, and Metro Channel is filming for its literary show, *Unblinking Eye.*



But the style council's full-court press is not confined to West Chelsea. At a book party in the Hamptons, "we all went round saying, 'This is the most *amazing* book in the world!' " says Sykes. "It sold out within an hour." She waves at Stephenson, who is autographing copies at the bar. "He is a sex symbol," she announces. "He's the new Peter Beard!"

SARAH BERNARD

THE PRODUCERS

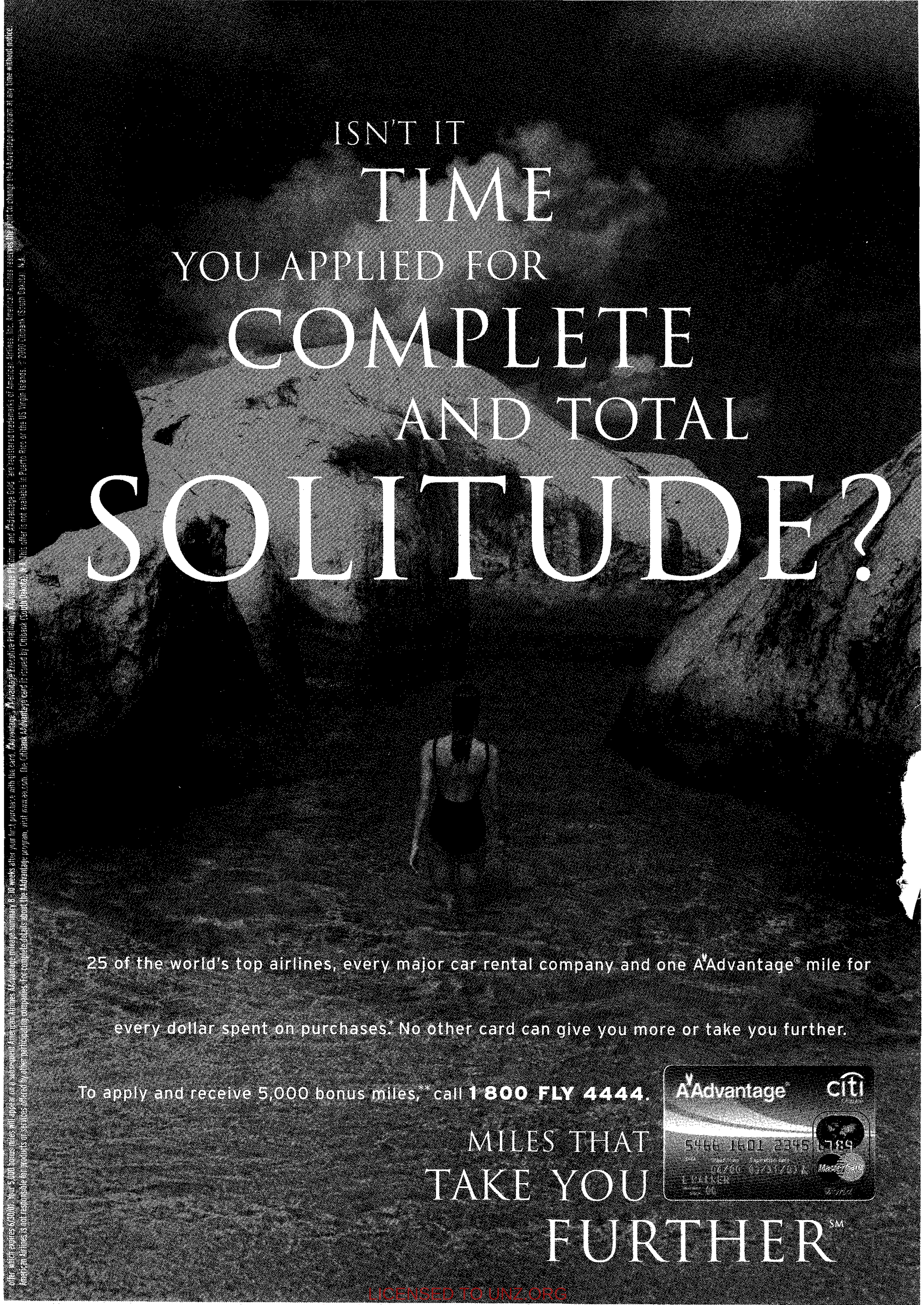
continued from page 19

against Rubin, and muddle through bankruptcy, the producers swear they are back. Again. They've got Barbara Kopple standing by to direct David Rabe's adaptation of his play *In the Boom Boom Room*, with Patricia Arquette starring and Lion's Gate set to distribute it domestically. And they're talking to an A-list director, they say, about taking on the adaptation of D. M. Thomas's novel *The White Hotel*, with a screenplay by the late, legendary Dennis Potter. All they need, says Geisler, is to firm up financing—the Hollywood equivalent of saying your Mercedes would run if only it had wheels.

Their latest lawyer, Paul Verner, says he expects to be paid once there's a movie deal. He'll have to get in line. Twyla Tharp, who agreed to choreograph bits of *Boom Boom Room*, is listed as a creditor for almost half a million dollars. A travel agent wants $20,000; a location scout, $16,000; a downtown landlord, $25,000; Potter's estate, 75,000 pounds sterling. But after years of bad debts and even worse press, the team continues to win friends and influence people.

"There are several European financiers incredibly interested if we can land this director," Geisler says, ready to build up the buzz again. "I *think* it will happen. But because I love the project too much, I won't gamble on naming him, because lawyers will start calling him and trying to dissuade him."

Photographs: left, Andrea Renault/globe photos; right, Brian Finke



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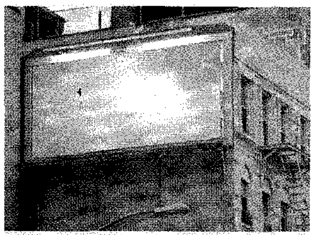


Creative Time to foist some culture on us. The enigmatic ads are by the late Cuban-born artist Felix González-Torres, who specified that the photos be displayed only on billboards in multiples of six. According to Creative Time's Wendy Dembo, "The ability to experience an image in an outdoor location, without any explanation, accessible to all, creates a territory rich with content. . . . Is my interpretation of a black-and-white photograph of a bird in the sky with no text surrounded by a brightly colored world full of media—a fleeting moment stopped in time—the same as someone else's?" Sounds *just* like the rationale behind that Anna Nicole Smith ad in Times Square.

Every Which Way But Fabulous

Never mind *Charlie's Angels:* The seventies sitcom that's inspiring next year's ready-to-wear is *B.J. and the Bear.* Both the November *Marie Claire* and the December *Elle* feature fashion spreads with simian models alongside their leggy evolutionary successors.

Journalism

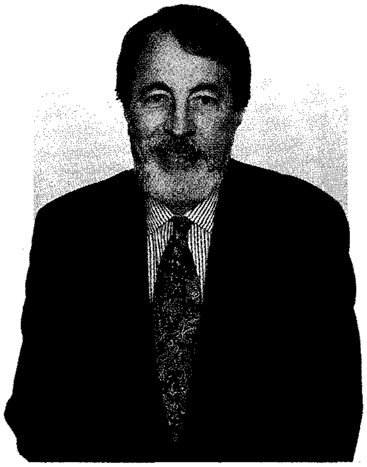
Admirable Nelson

Lars-Erik Nelson never became a celebrity pundit. He appeared on television rarely. He did not speak with bombast. But the *Daily News* columnist and *New York Review of Books* contributor who died last week at the age of 59 towered over most of American journalism.

Nelson was a very rare thing in the contemporary media: He was a voice of genuine morality. If the word puts you off, it's because so many charlatans have hijacked it to justify their latest poses. But it was exactly those people whom Lars so consistently and emphatically checked.

To say that he was best known for his position on this or that issue does him dishonor. To his legions of admirers—and virtually every serious-minded person I know held him in singular esteem—he was best known simply for slicing through the fog and saying what was true.

He was a liberal, and a merciless critic of Ken Starr, the House impeachment managers, and, more recently, George W. Bush. But I once heard him say, on one of his rare television appearances, that he was an enrolled Republican. It made a kind of sense: He belonged to, and apologized for, no one. As tough as he was on Starr, he also once wrote that Bill Clinton had disgraced his office and should resign.



He was serious, and those he wrote about had to take him seriously. Everyone is familiar with the *Times*'s astonishing apologia about its coverage of the Wen Ho Lee case. What not everyone knows is that it was Nelson, almost single-handedly, in a series of devastating columns who forced the paper's hand. I called him the day that "Editors' Note" ran. He was happy, as he had a right to be, but he still spent far more time talking about the case than about himself. It is no wonder that, after Murray Kempton died, *The New York Review of Books* turned to Nelson to write essays on politics: He possessed the same moral compass. He was a force for good.

MICHAEL TOMASKY

Publishing

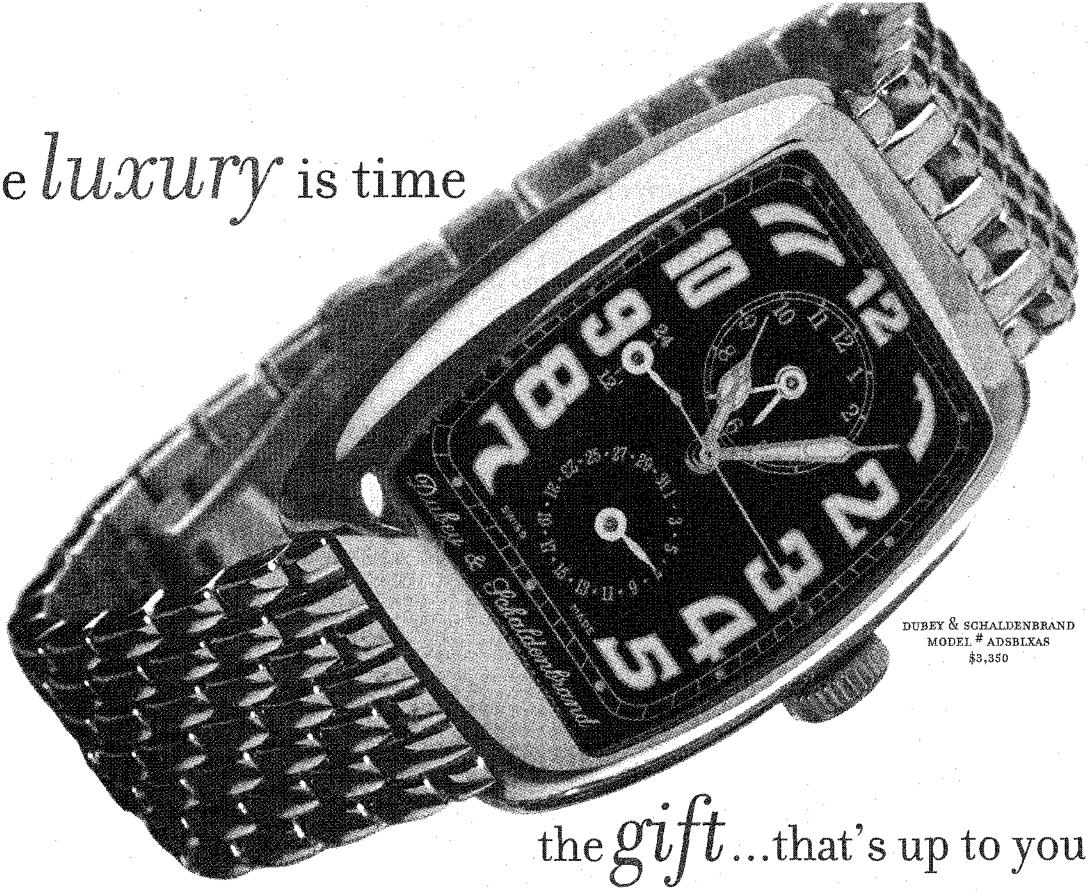
Harcourt Braces Itself

"The pressures on big publishers," says consultant Michael Shatzkin, "are such that any way they can add revenue is attractive. There is a dearth of $50 to $500 million companies. They've all been bought." Which explains why the major players are salivating over news that Harcourt General is being sold to international conglomerate Reed Elsevier for $5.6 billion: Harcourt is one of the three remaining textbook publishers, along with Houghton Mifflin and W.W. Norton, that has a consumer division, Harcourt Trade.

The hope is that the collision of Harcourt and Reed will dislodge a tasty morsel. Reed, which sold its trade publisher in the U.K. a few years ago, is an unlikely long-term parent, though Harcourt Trade publisher Dan Farley insists Reed is strategically committed to his division. Farley says he wants to grow his business but still keep it "small and focused." But his $60 million in revenue, from a frontlist of David Guterson, Umberto Eco, and three recent Nobel laureates, and a backlist of *The Little Prince*, Virginia Woolf, and George Orwell, is already creeping into the acquisition zone.

"There's a bit of spectator sport here," admits Farley, adding that envoys from all the major houses have "approached me to be a messenger to Reed." And Reed is returning phone calls. "The reason Harcourt is so appealing is the strength of its backlist," says HarperCollins CEO Jane Friedman, who won't say if she's made one of the calls. "Random House is interested in growing its trade business," says company spokesman Stuart Applebaum, who also won't confess to calling. "That's no secret." MARION MANEKER

Photograph: right, Daily News



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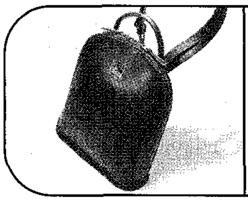
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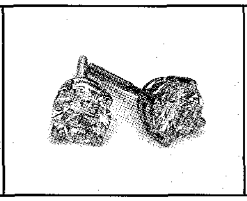
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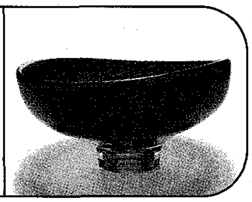
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Death and the Salesman

How do brokers sell a place where someone sees dead people—who were killed there? Very carefully.

"YOU KNEW THERE was something wrong," said Corcoran broker Carmen Cook of the classic seven her client was looking at renting on Riverside Drive—all French windows and hardwood floors, except, "in one of the bedrooms, the floor was covered with this ugly brown linoleum tile." Out of earshot of her customer, she asked the renting broker why the tile hadn't been pulled up. She was told, "There was a murder in there and they couldn't get the bloodstains out of the floor"—and the landlord balked at the expense of cleaning it properly. The apartment still rented for $4,000 a month.

Brokers don't agree on how to proceed when a violent death puts a choice property on the market. "There's no set standard," says A. Laurance Kaiser of Key-Ventures. Many say the best thing to say is as little as possible. But "the tactful way of putting it is, 'Are you aware of the history of the building?' " says broker Leslie J. Garfield. "If they're not, it's certainly the broker's responsibility to tell them."

Almost everyone is aware of the history of 20 East 65th Street, the townhouse where Kenneth Kimes and his mother murdered Irene Silverman. It's been sitting on the market since September 22, but Brown Harris Stevens broker Paula Del Nunzio doesn't blame its failure to sell on the killing, but rather the way it's divided into apartments. "It has ten tiny kitchens," she says. "Fifteen million is a lot to ask given what has to be done with it."

If a death hasn't been publicized, brokers can hide the evidence. "The estate wanted to get rid of it as soon as possible," says another broker of an apartment she sold in the East Forties. Although she told prospective buyers that someone had died there, "I didn't mention that it was a suicide."

Some customers definitely mind—"The Chinese won't buy if someone died in the apartment," says Corcoran broker Carrie Chiang—but in a housing market as competitive as this one, many clients aren't fazed by an apartment's murky past. "Some people don't really care," says Kaiser. Just check your sixth sense at the door. TARA PEPPER

On the Move

Life After Rupert

After Rupert Murdoch left her for a woman younger than their marriage, the formerly bicoastal **Anna Murdoch** decided to set up house here in New York. She and Rupert sold their $5.5 million Hampshire House pied-à-terre this spring (he moved to SoHo), and sources say Anna and her new husband, Henry Mann Securities chairman William Mann, were set to move to a $6.5 million place at the Westbury Hotel condo conversion. They backed out—after hiring a decorator—when she realized that her upstairs neighbor's new climate-control system had lowered her ceilings. Instead, they recently bought an entire 3,800-square-foot floor at 25 Sutton Place, a Rosario Candela building (but "not one of his best," cautions a broker). The place was last sold in 1993, and then gutted for $1.2 million. Presumably Murdoch and Mann paid more, but the co-op never went on the market. They also bought an eight-bedroom house in Southampton for $4.95 million; it used to be owned by Yasmin Aga Khan. C.S.

Big Deals

SoHo

473 Broadway

2-bed, 3-bath, study, 2,500-square-foot loft. Ask: $1,495,000. Sell: $1,400,000. Maintenance: $586. Three days on market.

A man who spends his days gazing at the guts of the tummy-troubled bought this loft in the former Hohner Harmonica warehouse, two back-to-back buildings at 46 Mercer and 473 Broadway that were disemboweled during a recent $10 million renovation. Looking at its nine-foot mahogany-framed windows, thirteen-foot ceilings, landmark status, and requisite SubZero, the laparoscopic surgeon saw investment potential at a price he could stomach. "He'll probably rent it out," says Adam Laboz, who brokered the sale. CHRISTOPHER TENNANT

Upper East Side

301 East 79th Street

2-bed, 2-bath, 1,200-square-foot condo. Ask: $679,000. Sell: $659,000. Maintenance: $980. Three weeks on market.

The lively (honk-honk!) street life of Second Avenue caused the seller of this condo, a single mom who owned an Internet venture, to install soundproof windows in her bedroom. Continental Towers was built in 1975—it went condo a decade later—and mainly houses "young families starting out," says Corcoran's Tina Eichenholz, who sold it. The buyer will bunk his two kids in the dining room when they come to visit. The seller must have found Second Avenue insufficiently Continental; she moved to Paris. JOY ARMSTRONG

Photograph by Milan Ryba/Globe Photos. Illustration by Ingo Fast.

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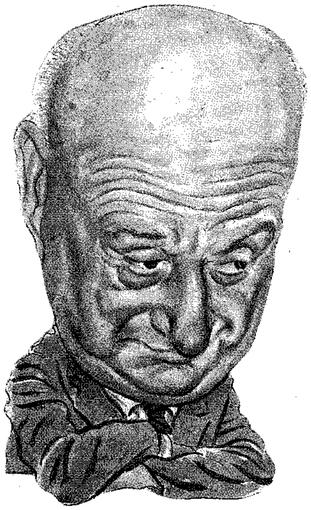
I'm Right, You're Wrong

ED KOCH VS. AL D'AMATO

Our penetrating pundits rumble over purloined elections, General Giuliani, and Palm Beach pandemonium



Maer Roshan: This morning, as ballot counters were accusing each other of swallowing chads, the Supreme Court stoked the furor by ruling hand counts could continue. How ugly will it get?

Ed Koch: It might get a lot uglier. Watching James Baker's response on CNN, I really felt a chill. As he voiced his contempt for the court I felt that he was capable of a coup d'état. If it happens, I'm gonna go to Tallahassee, stand in the streets, and defend the judges from arrest.

Al D'Amato: Look, Ed, the way the Gore people are carrying on, the only thing we need to defend the judges from is fatigue! It's obvious that the Gore team only want to count the votes that favor them. They haven't even resolved the issue of the military ballots, which the Democrats are still refusing to count. Everyone agrees they should be counted, and the refusal of the Gore campaign to give in demonstrates how desperate they are. To deprive military men and women of their vote because of a technicality is horrendous.

Ed: I agree. Of *course* the military ballots should be counted, and I'd like to find the Democrat who tried to reject them and flay him. It's a public-relations nightmare! How stupid could they be?

M.R.: Where do you think this is all headed?

Al: The whole mess may end up in the U.S. Supreme Court, though there's a good possibility it will wind up in the Florida Legislature. If *that* happens, the Republican majority will almost certainly throw the election to Bush.

Ed: Well, Al, if it *does* happen—if the Republican Legislature basically *steals* the election—there *will* be a major crisis. People won't stand for it. It's Fascist!

M.R.: I think we'd better be careful using that word around Senator D'Amato.

Al: [*Laughs.*] That's a little melodramatic, Ed. It's *not* Fascism. But awful things will happen if this continues for long. When people believe something's unfair, they get angry and distrustful of the whole system. And whoever is elected will enter office too tainted to govern.

M.R.: Aren't both of them pretty tainted already?

Al: Well, they certainly aren't doing themselves any favors. I'm getting a little tired of how Al Gore keeps saying how he's not really interested in the outcome but "just wants to ensure the democratic process." Nonsense. The whole thing could have been avoided if Florida had standards in place to determine how these ballots should be counted. Given that Florida *has* no standards, the only reasonable standard is *penetration!*

Ed: [*Looks quizzical.*] Penetration?

Al: The *ballot*, Ed. To count, the ballot should be fully punched in. Forget pregnant chads and dimpled ballots. *Full penetration*! It reminds me of the old standard for proving adultery. Back in the fifties, to convict a couple of adultery you didn't have to prove actual *penetration*. All you had to prove was opportunity, intent, and inclination. Were they in the motel together? What were they *doing* in the motel? The Democrats want to apply the same standard to the election. They think they can divine opportunity, intent, and inclination by staring at a chad.

M.R.: The Florida justices seem to agree, even chastising Katherine Harris for allowing partisan concerns to overshadow her duties.

Al: Well, the Florida court isn't exactly free of partisanship either. Harris did exactly what was right—no more, no less. Any Democrat would have done the same.

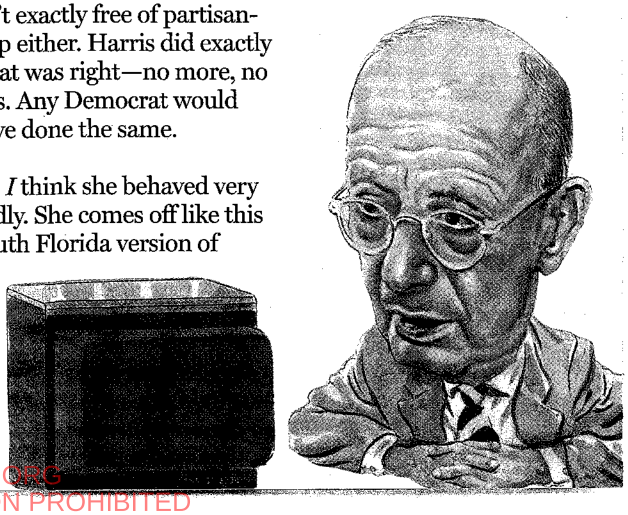
Ed: *I* think she behaved very badly. She comes off like this South Florida version of Leona Helmsley. Except she wears a lot more makeup. [*Laughs.*] And she ended up destroying her career.

M.R.: What about Gore's career? A while back you predicted that if he *did* get defeated, Gore would become almost a shadow president by virtue of having won the popular vote. Has he lost his edge now that the process has dragged on for so long?

Al: Whoever wins has a lot going against him. He will be entering office badly damaged. I think that's not irreversible, though. It just means that in his policies, his statements, his cabinet, the new president must compromise.

M.R.: Speaking of the cabinet, the latest rumor making the rounds is that Bush may tap Rudy to be attorney general.

Ed: If that rumor is spreading, it's because Rudy's spreading it. [*Laughs.*] I find it highly unlikely. It's true the mayor's major claim to fame is law enforcement. But you know, he isn't exactly a team player. For Bush to take Rudy into his cabinet would be like taking a tarantula to bed. ■



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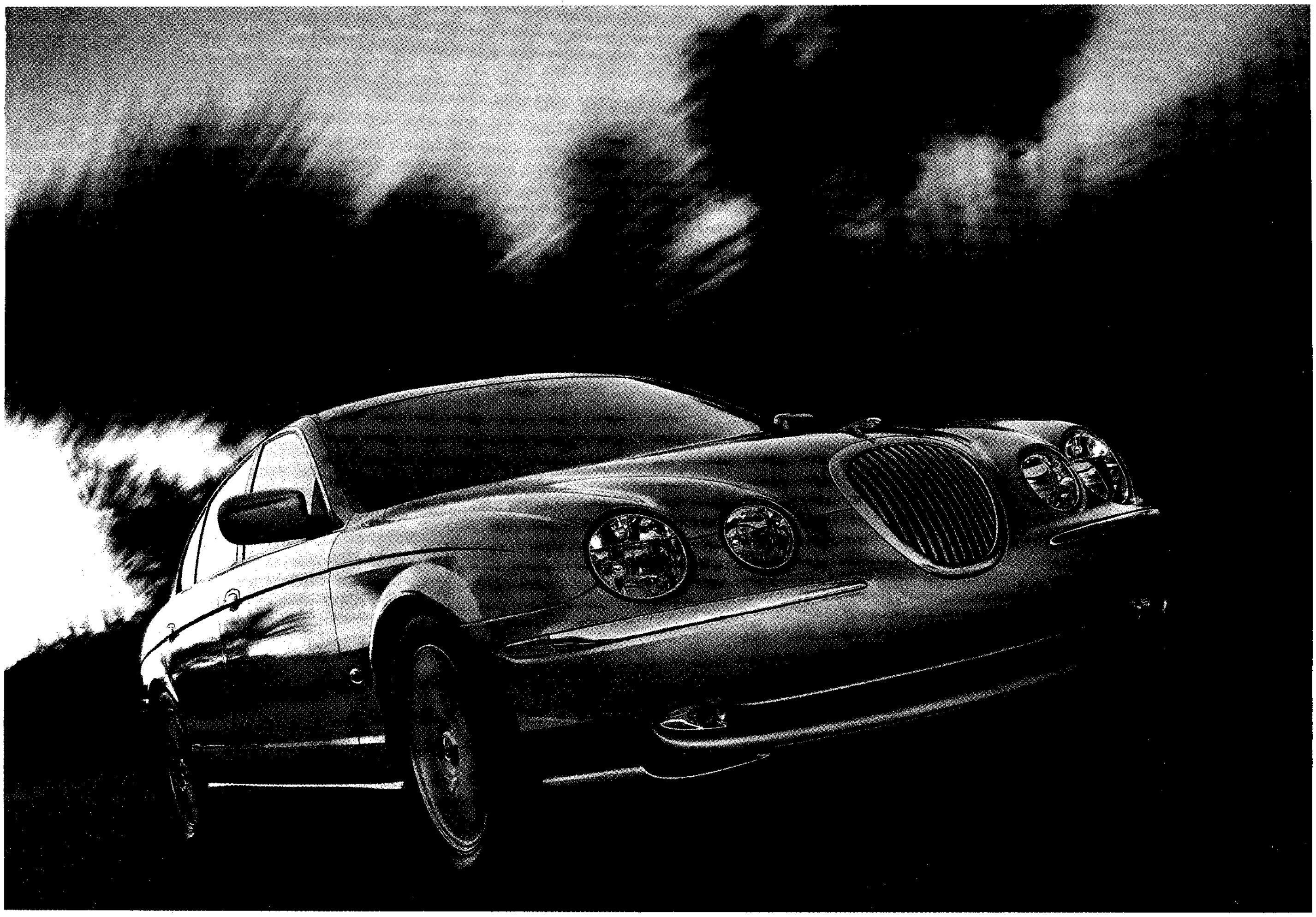

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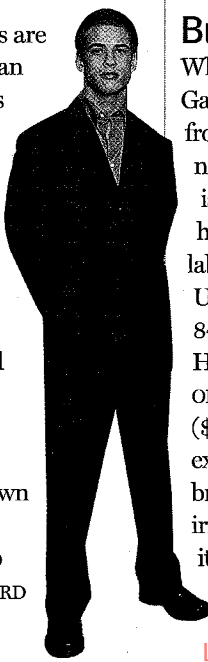
Smart Set

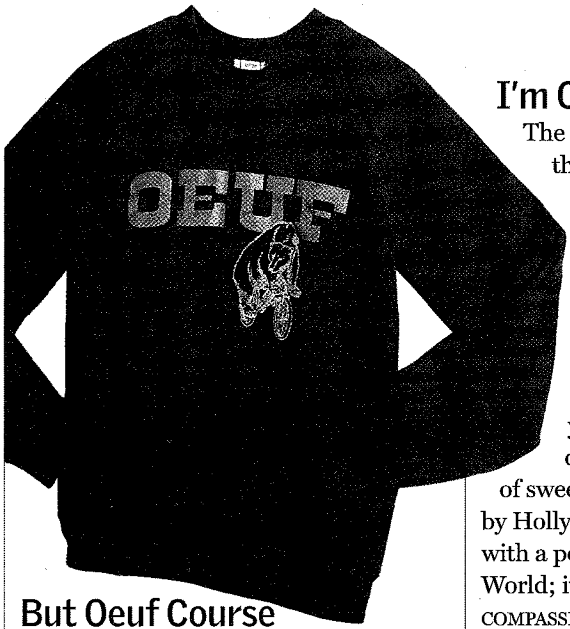
Just Joey

There's a new verb in town: *Joey'ed.* As in, *I'm a little tingly today, I've been Joey'ed.* Or, *Your face looks fresh. Have you been Joey'ed?* Being Joey'ed is something that only Just Joey, a bicoastal waxing guru who sets up shop once a month at the Shoreham hotel, can do to you. (The name? "A client would say, 'My guy is the best bikini wax you'll ever get,' and her friends would go, 'Your *guy*?,' and she'd go, 'Oh, It's just Joey. You'll understand.' " His specialties are eyebrows—classic, arched, and Audrey Hepburn–shaped with richly dyed lashes to match—and bikini lines (brows start at $60, lashes at $35, and "The *Playboy*" bikini wax is $75), but he'll remove anything else. "Ask yourself," he advises, "is a blonde moustache really any better? Just take it off. With everything off you wake up in the morning, *you still look great!* Who wouldn't want that?" It's much easier figuring out who would: Just Joey's Manhattan weeks are booked solid with the city's top beauty and fashion editors, who line up at the Shoreham in identical states of grow-in. "Hair?" Just Joey pronounces the word like it tastes bad. "Hair was originally a form of warmth and protection. But let's face it. The cave days are o-*ver*!" A.L.

Following Suit

When you finally check in to the ever-about-to-open 60 Thompson hotel, now slated for a December debut, don't be surprised if the bellhop's outfit is nicer than yours. Owner Jason Pomeranc had eighties godfather Nino Cerruti custom-design the staff's uniforms—though some may associate him more with *American Psycho* power shoulders than with SoHo chic. (Cerruti, you'll recall, dressed Christian Bale and friends for the Bret Easton Ellis spectacular.) "All *these* suits are unconstructed," says Julian Cerruti, in town with his father Nino for the nuptials of longtime client Michael Douglas. "The shirts don't have any cuff links. It's our modern suiting statement." Which means single-breasted jackets with narrow peaked lapels and knee-length slit skirts in camel and navy. Navy? In SoHo? "The tyranny of black in downtown establishments," says Pomeranc, "should come to an end." SARAH BERNARD



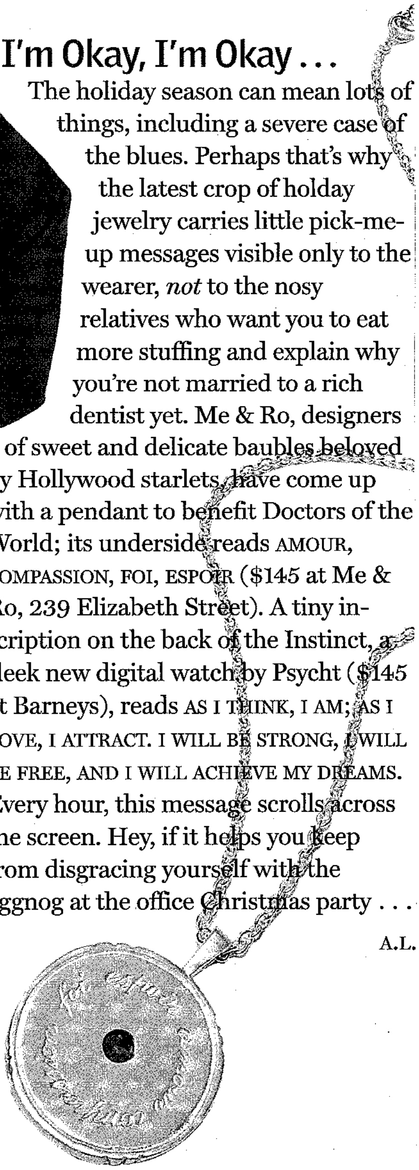


But Oeuf Course

While big-league brands like Nike and the Gap continue to emblazon everything from billboards to waistbands with their names, a new, more mysterious emblem is surfacing in the city. Already a smash hit in the U.K. and Japan, British cult label Oeuf (French for egg) has arrived at Union (172 Spring Street; 212-226-8493), bringing with it designer Andrew Hartwell's cheeky wordplay (HEL ON OEUF, FUCK OEUF) printed on sweats ($86) and tees ($42). "It started as an experiment to see if people would buy a brand whose name was weird and totally irrelevant," says Hartwell. "But now that it's selling, I guess Oeuf does mean something." JOEL FERREE

I'm Okay, I'm Okay . . .

The holiday season can mean lots of things, including a severe case of the blues. Perhaps that's why the latest crop of holday jewelry carries little pick-me-up messages visible only to the wearer, *not* to the nosy relatives who want you to eat more stuffing and explain why you're not married to a rich dentist yet. Me & Ro, designers of sweet and delicate baubles beloved by Hollywood starlets, have come up with a pendant to benefit Doctors of the World; its underside reads AMOUR, COMPASSION, FOI, ESPOIR ($145 at Me & Ro, 239 Elizabeth Street). A tiny inscription on the back of the Instinct, a sleek new digital watch by Psycht ($145 at Barneys), reads AS I THINK, I AM; AS I LOVE, I ATTRACT. I WILL BE STRONG, I WILL BE FREE, AND I WILL ACHIEVE MY DREAMS. Every hour, this message scrolls across the screen. Hey, if it helps you keep from disgracing yourself with the eggnog at the office Christmas party . . . A.L.



Photographs: counterclockwise from top, Karen Pearson; Noah Sheldon (2); Michael Kraus (2).

what's your weakness?

mmmm

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THE ELECTION **Chris Smith**

Political Football

Two crucial American events occurred last week in Tallahassee: the election drama, and the Florida–Florida State game. Florida thoroughly enjoyed them both.

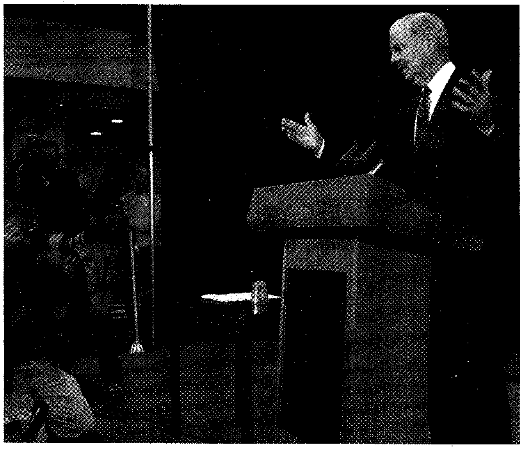
“WHAT IS THIS—THE WOMEN’S BATHroom?” cracks Barry Richard, the white-maned leader of the Republicans’ Florida legal team, drawing a loud laugh from the slow-moving queue. America’s most powerful political players are lined up to relieve themselves during a ten-minute recess of the Florida Supreme Court, and they’re joking like guys between innings at the ballpark. Then they’ll go back to fighting bitterly over the next leader of the free world.

Zip. *Flllusshhhh.* James A. Baker III adjusts his impeccable, custom-made navy suit and turns to wash his hands. His lordly smirk is firmly in place, even here. “Yepppp,” Baker says, in the nonchalant drawl of a man who assumes that victory is a mere hour away. “It sure will be good to get away for a few days.”

WEIRDNESS AND PROFUNDITY CRASH ON TOP of each other all week in Florida, like waves propelled to shore by a rapidly approaching storm. The high-mindedness of the Constitution collides with dirty bargains out of Robert Penn Warren and then is filtered through the absurdities of Carl Hiassen. Football zealots boot reporters out of hotel rooms; MSNBC’s elegant Chris Jansing finds herself bunking in a law-student dorm by night and parsing arcane election statutes by day, live, in a howling, chill wind. Warren Christopher strides to the door of the Florida Supreme Court and is stopped by a state marshal with a clipboard: “And you are?” asks the marshal.

It is all silly, epochal, and wonderfully . . . American. Politics has a fantastic week in Florida, in both senses of the adjective. Instead of being the degradation of our democracy, as the pundit priesthood kept insisting, the recount battle, with its ugly maneuvering and its earnest argument, its big-money excesses and its paper-thin margins, is a bracing display of the ambiguity of real-life politics.

Take Baker. He wins the infighting over how to allot the Republicans’ speaking roles before the Florida Supreme Court, giving Washington’s Michael Carvin twenty minutes to local boy Richard’s five. “The RNC is paying the bills,” says another lawyer sitting at the Bush table, “so Baker gets his way.”



Law and Disorder: Top, lawyers David Boies and Dexter Douglass arrive at court; bottom, Jim Baker spins the verdict.

Only to watch Carvin splutter badly under sharp questioning by the judges. And with the Supreme Court’s recount extension, Baker sees himself on the verge of blowing his second Bush presidential campaign. Then Baker wins again—maybe—when Miami-Dade County surrenders. Suddenly I remember the pessimism of a top Gore aide from the night before. It seemed peculiar then, with so much still in doubt. “Those stories about Daley floating the idea we’ll fold our tent if we don’t win the recount, those are premature. The vice-president really hasn’t thought about how to end this.” Then the aide took a deep breath. “But Gore may have to figure it out. Very soon.”

IN FLORIDA, ALUMNI BONDS MEAN as much as party affiliations when contracts and patronage are doled out. So on Saturday night, when Florida State meets its hated rival, the University of Florida, the skybox of FSU’s president is more than a warm place to watch football. Supreme Court judges are here, and so is heiress-hack-heroine Katherine Harris.

Down on the cold aluminum bleacher seats, among the 80,000 raucous, garnet-and-gold face-painted Florida State Seminole fans, one of Harris’s closest aides weaves unsteadily. The Harris aide holds his cell phone in the air, passing it around to his pals. “Listen to this—Tom Brokaw wants me!” the aide yells with a laugh, replaying his voice mail. “And Larry King!” The media can wait; he goes back to tomahawk-chopping in unison with the other FSU fans. Four days later, when chanting Republicans riot at a Miami election office, I wonder how many got their crowd-behavior training at football games in Tallahassee.

DAVID BOIES IS IN A SEVENTH-FLOOR OFfice at a downtown law firm that’s serv-

Photographs: top, by Newsmakers; bottom, Stan Honda/ Newscom.

ing as Gore headquarters. Equipment was shipped in all week, ten computers arriving by overnight mail. Even with George W. Bush's slim lead holding steady and the nationally televised Supreme Court arguments looming, the Democratic lawyers are able to laugh: Boies's team is tapping out its briefs on Microsoft software. "There are," a Boies aide says, "a lot of ironies at work down here."

On Monday afternoon, Boies leads the Gore crew briskly up the marble steps of the Supreme Court, then waits when there's a security bottleneck just outside the heavy steel doors. Boies is in a clump of about a dozen men and women, but he's the only one to turn around and slowly gaze at the carnival of protesters, media, and citizens behind him, soaking up the moment.

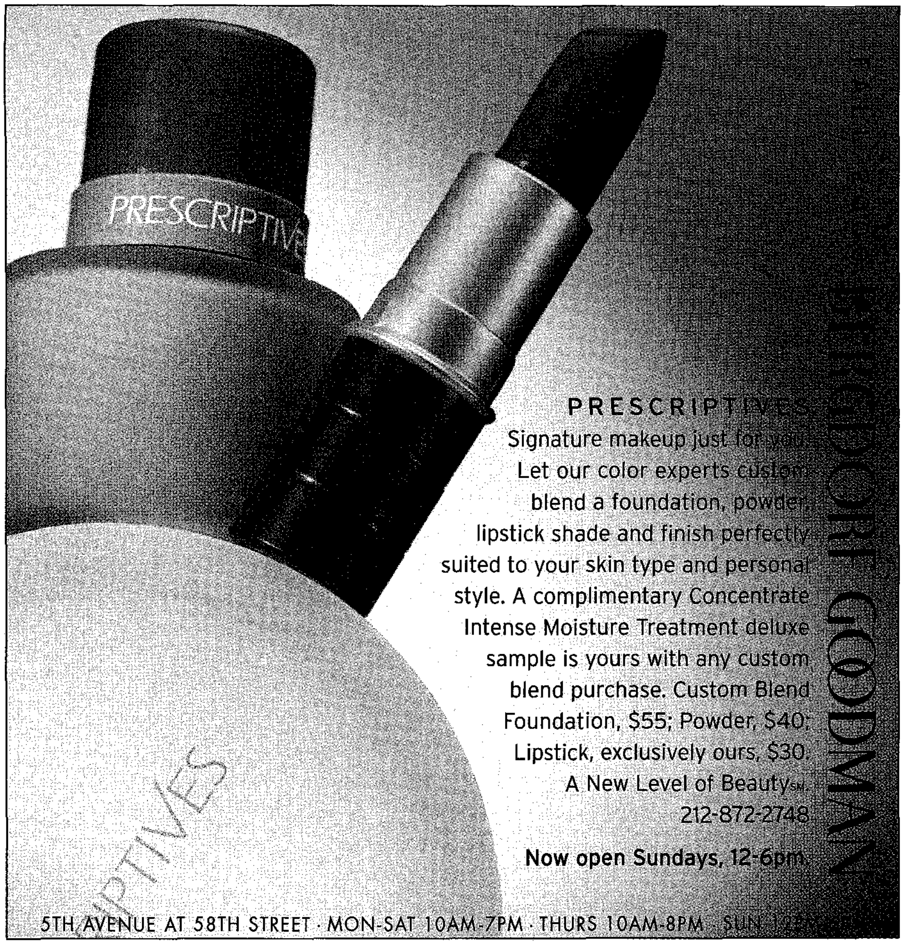
Inside the courtroom, in a way TV couldn't capture, the music of the voices stands out. Just as a lawyer builds oratorical momentum, the allegro rhythm kicking in, Chief Justice Charles Wells, sounding like a low-country pastor, halts the flow. Or the adagio comes from the basso inflections of Justice Leander Shaw. Then, just as abruptly, the beat races again, invigorated by Justice Barbara Pariente, her voice clipping along like a subway from her native New York.

Boies is interrupted, too, but his voice, calming like an "All Things Considered" host's, never rises or falls, comforting the judges as they search for a new path. But to where?

IN COURT, I SIT ONE ROW BEHIND A STATE senator named Skip. Later that night I bump into him at Cafe Cabernet, a restaurant buzzing with cigar-smoking middle-age men and pneumatic young blondes in leather pants. *Newsweek*'s Monicagate star, Michael Isikoff, huddles over dinner with Bush lawyer Ted Olson, who the next day will petition the U.S. Supreme Court to overrule Florida's judges.

At a raised cocktail table, Skip sits with two old pals, Big Sugar and Sally. He's a heavyweight cane-industry lobbyist. She's a Sharon Stone look-alike and a lobbyist who is vague about her clientele. "You ain't seen nothing of the way Florida works," Big Sugar bellows. "How long you packed for? A week? *Sheee-it.* In a week I could show you things about this state you wouldn't ever believe. But I don't think you could handle it."

Skip laughs. "The sugar business, Gore, Bush—this is all just politics," he says. "And what's so bad about that?" ■



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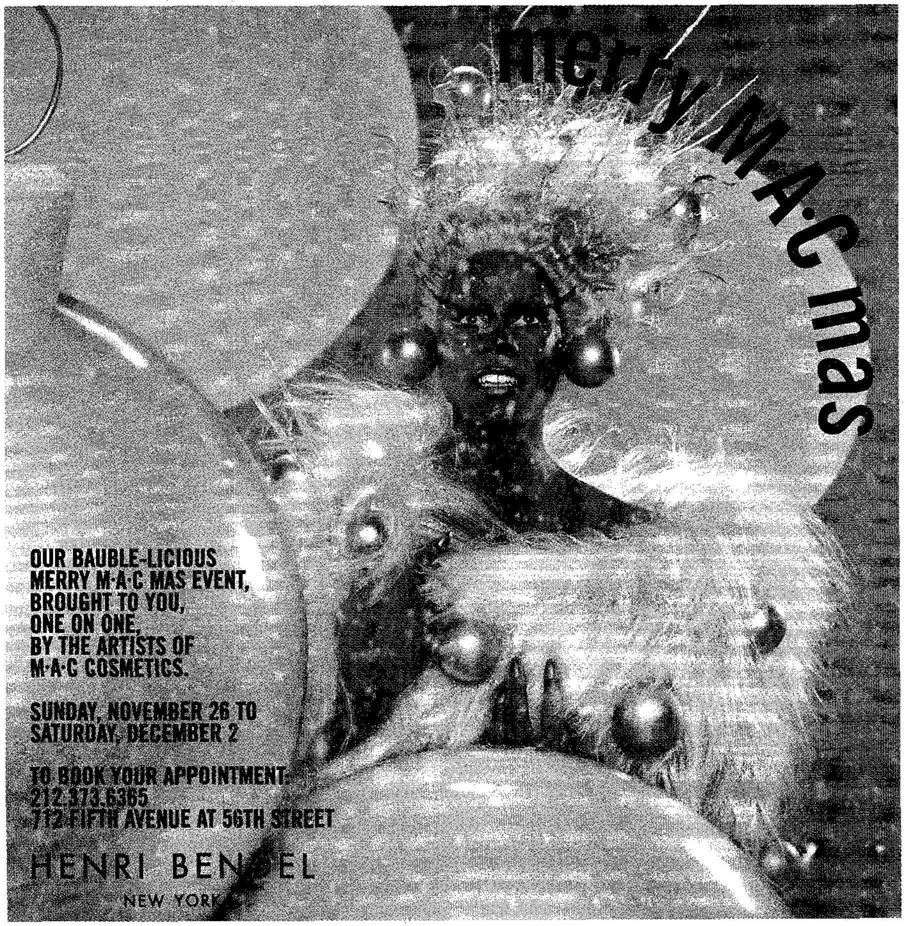

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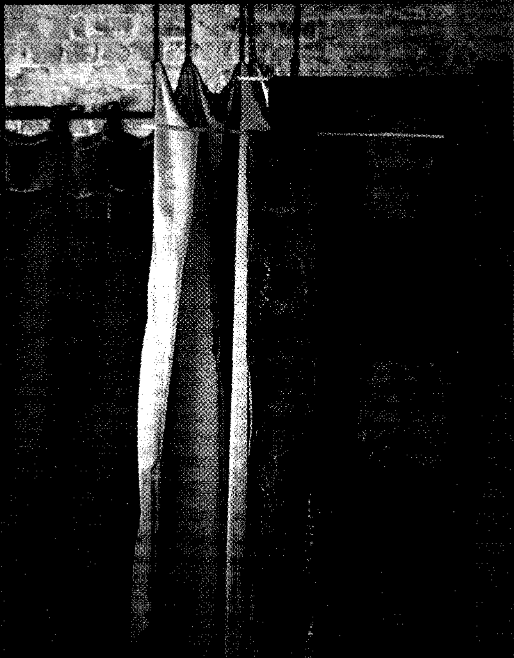

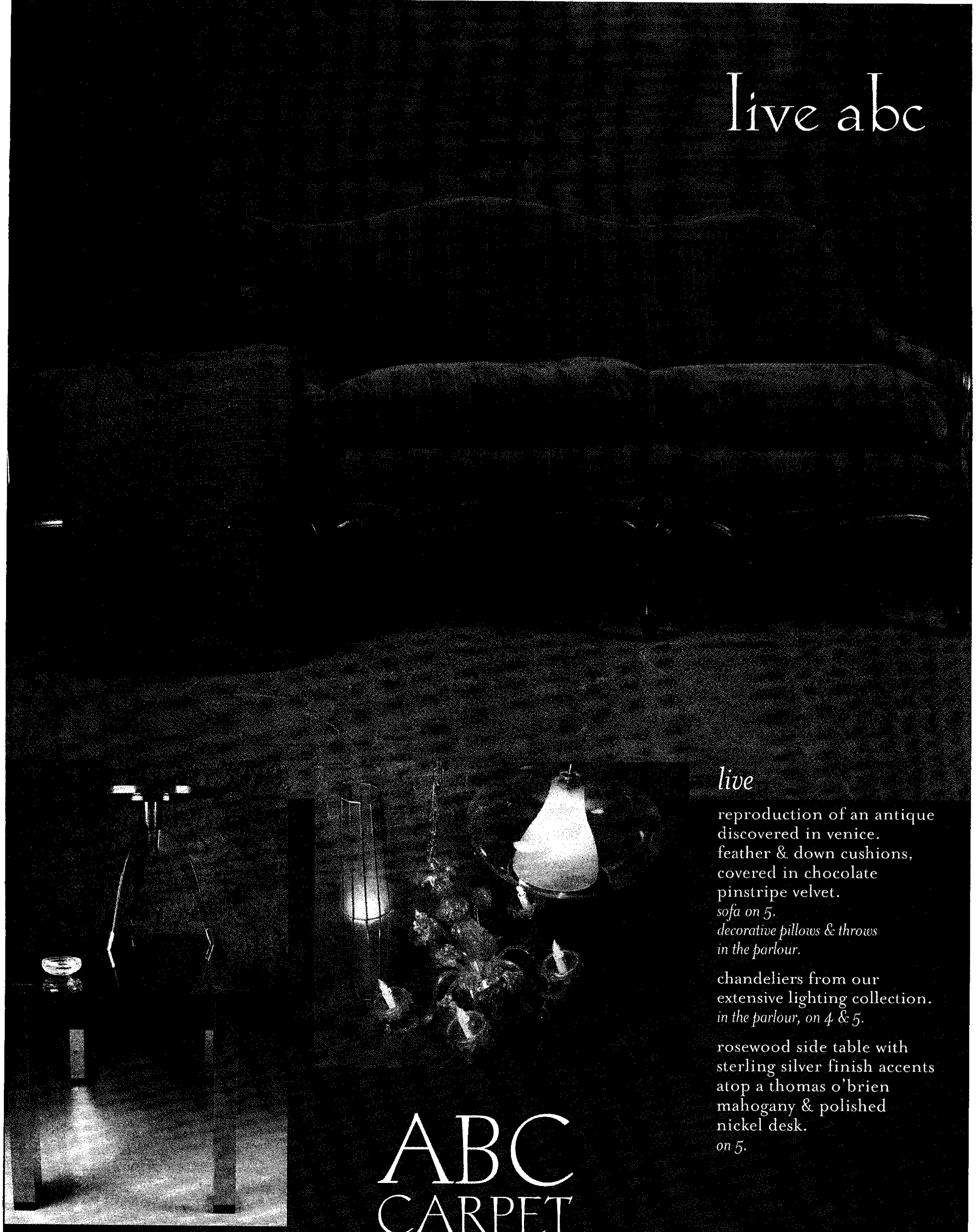

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Anthony Haden-Guest THE CULTURE BUSINESS

Horror Showman

How Lloyd Kaufman of Troma Entertainment (*Class of Nuke 'Em High; The Toxic Avenger*) became the city's leading B-movie auteur.

This is how the script begins:

FADE IN
INTERIOR STUDY
DAY

A gun on a table. A poster for Fritz Lang's The Big Heat *hangs on the wall. A hand reaches and grabs [the pistol]. We dolly back as the gun is lifted to the man's head and he pulls the trigger. BANG! Brains and gore spew against the wall. He slumps across the desk, and immediately a rush of blood spills from his pulverized head onto the floor.*

At the staircase leading upstairs, footsteps are heard. A young, ravishing woman appears. Unmoved by the bloodshed, she walks over to the desk. She notices an envelope. She picks it up and reads the inscription—

SON
ALL OF MY LOVE FOREVER.
DAD

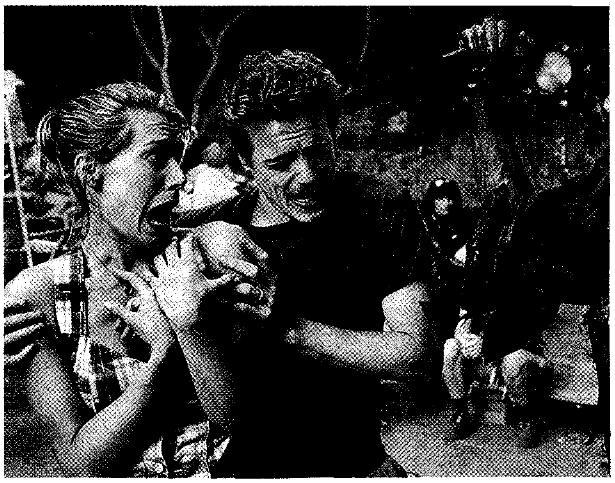
Her eyes narrow. Suddenly the dead man leans up and sneezes, spattering blood and snot on her face. She screams. The half-headed man calmly stands up and pulls something from his nose.

MAN:
I'm so sorry, one of my teeth has gotten stuck up my nose.

And from here on in, things start getting really ugly.

CINEPHILES—OF A CERTAIN STRIPE, ANYway—may recognize the signature touch of Troma Entertainment, the outfit whose *oeuvre* includes such titles as *The Toxic Avenger* and *Class of Nuke 'Em High.*

The movie being shot is *Terror Firmer.* The half-headed man is the Toxic Avenger's father (Troma could teach George Lucas a thing or two about the art of the prequel), and though journalism schools rightly condemn "foreshadowing," I have to tell you this demanding role is played by myself. It should be noted that my fellow castmates included more formidable nonprofessionals: Trey Parker and Matt Stone, creators of *South Park,* impersonate a hermaphrodite couple; Lemmy from Motörhead does a public-service announcement; Richard Johnson, of "Page Six," plays a stiff.



Troma supports Gore: An attack on the set of *Terror Firmer.*

TROMA, WHICH WAS launched by Lloyd Kaufman and Michael Herz in 1974, has an eighteen-movie retrospective at the Anthology Film Archives on Second Avenue opening on December 1. *Terror Firmer* will run there concurrently. It is an overdue honor for an outfit that has occupied the same Hell's Kitchen offices since 1979. (Herz shows his face in public so rarely that Kaufman has sometimes blithely introduced Joe Fleishaker, a 400-pound Troma actor, as his absent partner.) The office décor is self-referential, consisting mostly of Troma movie posters and promotional knickknacks. These include a green Toxic Avenger soft toy; lapel pins urging that people get tromatized; and various props, like a head from *Sgt. Kabukiman NYPD,* that are kept around, partly as memorabilia, partly on the off chance that they might fit into another movie.

As it happens, it was at a *Kabukiman* opening in 1996 that I made the acquaintance of Lloyd Kaufman. I had been invited by Lisa Gaye, who has played the villainess in other Troma movies. The movie was vividly gross—no Troma movie is complete without bare bosoms ("That's not me!" an actress sang out at the screening, as we saw her being tossed topless out of a window) and at least one prolonged and copiously productive vomiting scene. But on the whole, *Kabukiman* was funny and had an eccentric edge.

We dined with Lloyd and Patricia Kaufman a few days later. He had a sly, seraphic manner, like a guru who keeps an eye on the bottom line. She is a pretty blonde woman who taught at Spence for seventeen years. She met Kaufman on a yacht. They married, and she worked as an executive assistant at Troma on three Troma movies, including *The Toxic Avenger.* In 1994, she served as deputy finance director on George Pataki's gubernatorial campaign. Her appointment as the state's Deputy Commissioner for Motion Picture and Television Development speaks well of the governor.

When it comes to Troma, Patricia is a loyalist—and tolerant. But then, she pretty much has to be. The two adorable little girls skewered to death in *Kabukiman* are Lisbeth and Charlotte, two of

Photograph by Evan Kafka.

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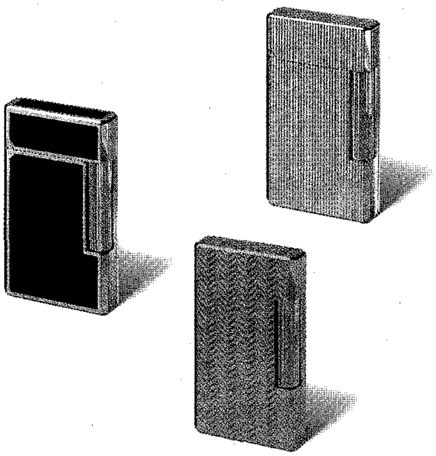

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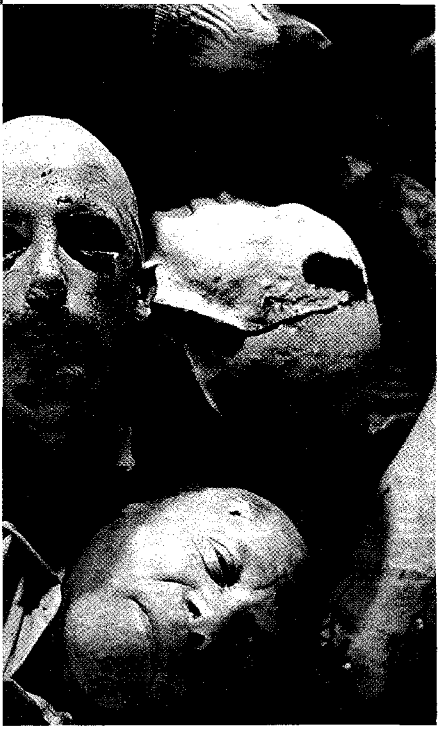
the three Kaufman daughters; Lisbeth played her first role at 18 months. The pair had handled their recent roles like troupers, Kaufman told me. "My wife's the only one who hasn't been murdered yet," he added.

Troma movies, in short, are not your ordinary exploitation flicks. True, they are jaw-droppingly crude, with cheesy production values and the excessive interest in gore, breasts, and the squelchier body functions of a hormonally overcharged adolescent male. But each has an authentically weird vision, connecting to filmmaker Roger Corman; to R. Crumb, S. Clay Wilson, and the other Zap Comix maestros; to "serious" artists like Mike Kelley and Raymond Pettibon. Stephen Holden, reviewing *Tromeo & Juliet* in the New York *Times,* suggested that it was to Hollywood B movies "what *Mad* magazine is to comic books" and called the flick "goofily exhilarating." Lloyd Kaufman is a true subversive, a blast from the sixties. It is no accident that Troma movies have become something of a cult.



Spawn of Kaufman: Kaufman with daughters, whom he's pressed into service as actresses; right, the author relaxes in a heap of body parts on the set.

It is notoriously hard to get at the financial secrets of cults, of course, and Troma is no exception. Some figures can be winkled out, however. *Squeeze Play,* which was Troma's first hit, cost $300,000 to make, and printed estimates of its gross range from $10 million to $18 million. *The Toxic Avenger* cost less than $900,000 and made at least $15 million. The movie and its hero, "Toxie," also spawned three sequels, a cartoon series, and bales of merchandising. Troma is content even if a theatrical release breaks even—the gravy comes from television, cable, and, of course, video. "Somehow, Lloyd has figured out a way of doing it that works for him," says movie-industry analyst Len Klady.

IT'S NOT GIVING AWAY MUCH TO SAY THAT the plot of *Terror Firmer* concerns a movie being made within a movie. In a New Jersey warehouse, Kaufman was rehearsing a tall young woman with satin boots, long blonde hair, huge wounded eyes, and bosoms that looked round and hard enough to inflict damage.

"Action!" Kaufman said.

Kerr-blooey!

Twin craters appeared on the artiste's torso; her breasts looked like recently snuffed volcanos. Her white lab coat was a goner.

"Didn't that hurt?" I marveled.

"Actually, it stung a bit," she said matter-of-factly.

By the time I was on, I had grown used to various Troma customs—the habit of clapping at the end of a take, the way passengers traveling on a dodgy Third World airline applaud a successful landing, for instance. Or the consoling mantra somebody—usually Kaufman himself—mouths when a shoot goes awry: "That's Tromaville!"

My first scene was the suicide. They seated me at a hideous desk. Behind, a hideous painting was flanked by hideous gift-shop statuettes of Lou Costello and Curly, the third Stooge.

An unmanageably huge handgun was handed to me ceremoniously by the weapons guy, who clicked it open to show that no joker had put in a blank.

Or, come to that, a live one.

"Action!" Kaufman says. Click. Head hits desk.

Kaufman got it in three takes.

The second scene was the post-head-slump. Enter Ruth Pongstaphone-Safer, who'd cast my head in dental alginate a couple of weeks before. "Are you ready to be messed up?" she asked me brightly, and led me into her domain.

Her favorite ingredients were arrayed on a ready palette: Campbell's split-pea soup, Kraft pancake syrup, Key Food instant mashed potatoes, Karo corn syrup, Hershey's syrup, cotton balls, and plenty of gelatin. "Gelatin is a lot of fun. It's got a very lifelike quality if you mix it," Ruth said. There was a jar of what looked like outsize cocktail onions on the table. For some reason they filled me with unease.

"What are those?" I asked. "Those are your eyeballs!" she said and set to work smearing gunk onto my head as if it were a Belgian waffle.

"You smell like liver!" Kaufman congratulated me, then turned to an assistant and asked, "Did the slime come yet?"

"Momentarily," he was told.

The slime might not have come, but a good deal else had. Desk, walls, even the *Big Heat* poster had been spattered with gobs, puddles, and chunks of pink and gray . . . stuff.

Hang on. There was something there that wasn't pink or gray. It was black.

"Watch out! There's some coffee spilled here," bawled the A.D.

"Art department!" Lloyd Kaufman yelled. "Who's got the paper towels?"

"Action!" he said finally.

I dropped my head.

Sploosh!

It was sploosh after sploosh for take after take after take.

The next scene was about the movie-within-the-movie scene, and it was crammed with various beloved Troma characters. "Kabukiman! Dolphin Man! Everybody!" Kaufman said. "Hey, guys! We need someone to play Fish Man." His eye fastened on an actor holding several loops of translucent tubing and a colossal blood-filled syringe.

"Art department!" Kaufman barked. "What he's got does not look disgusting enough."

Photographs courtesy of Troma.

LOYD KAUFMAN AND MICHAEL HERZ ARE both New Yorkers. Kaufman grew up on East 62nd Street; his father was a awyer who was a pioneer in minority-shareholder class-action suits. Herz's father was a furrier, and the family lived n Forest Hills. Kaufman and Herz met at Yale. "My brother and Michael went to camp together," Kaufman says. "I had a black-and-white TV set. The kind that went like this when a car passed"—he zigged and zagged a hand. "He liked to watch TV. So he had to talk to me."

The talk became movie-nut talk. Kaufman was a fan of experimental moviemaker Stan Brakhage and composer John Cage. At Yale, he shot a feature-length movie, *The Girl Who Returned*. It was an exercise in Warholesque tedium, but it did okay on the college circuit because he advertised it with a picture of a young woman lying on her back, an orgasmic expression on her face.

Kaufman took various movie jobs after leaving Yale. He was a gofer at Cannon, then a production assistant. He also he tried his hand as a scriptwriter. Indeed, Kaufman and Stan Lee, the progenitor of Marvel comics, co-wrote a script for Alain Resnais, the reticent auteur of *Last Year at Marienbad*. The script—"a sublime comedy about . . . I honestly can't remember," says Kaufman—was not produced.

Kaufman and Michael Herz set up Troma in 1974 with $300 worth of financing in a rented storage room on Park Avenue. They were always contrarian. As the received wisdom was that comedy and sex didn't mix in movies, the first Troma movies duly were bawdy comedies like *Squeeze Play* and *Waitress*, all directed by Kaufman under the pseudonym Samuel Weil and sometimes co-directed with Herz. They also acquired *Sizzle Beach* (which gave Kevin Costner an early role, as a wealthy rancher). Then the studios decided that sex and comedy did mix, after all: *Porky's* and a slew of other movies came scrambling into Troma's nifty niche.

At that point, Kaufman read in *Variety* that the genre of horror movies was dead. Great! Make a horror movie! *The Toxic Avenger* came out in 1985, and the Troma aesthetic was born.

The Troma archive now includes something like 900 movies, including movies Troma merely produces and those acquired from such eccentric talents as Italy's Dario Argento. A Troma movie will typically be brought in for under $1 mil-

Continued on page 151

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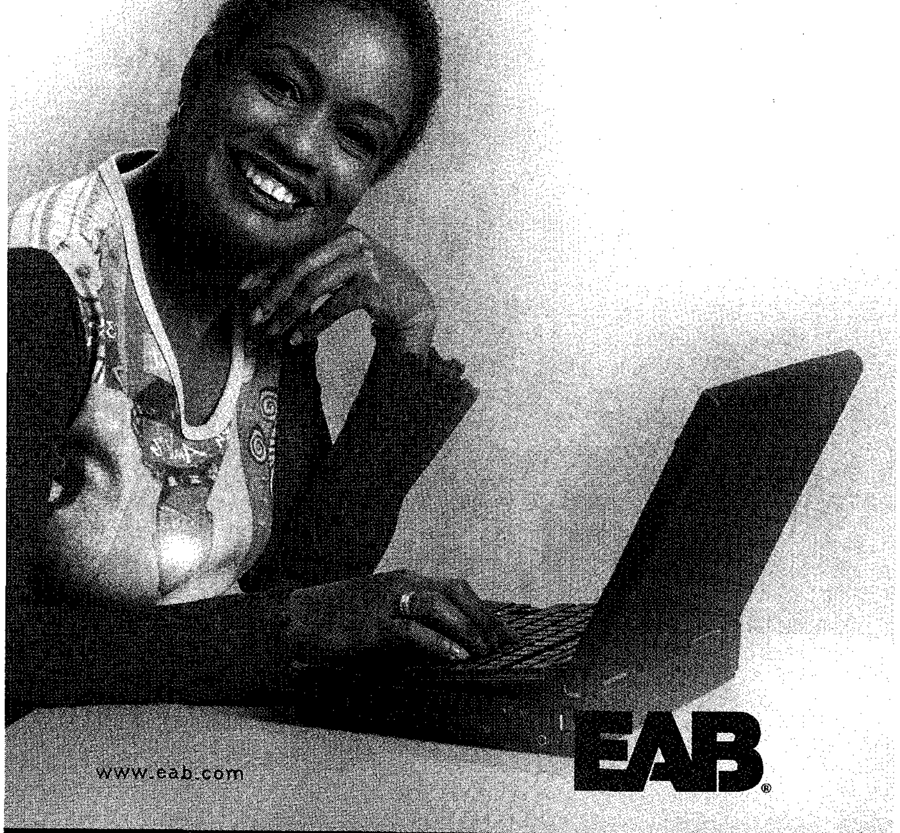

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OUR REMOTE-CONTROL PRESIDENT

by Michael Wolff

Forget David Boies, dimpled chads, and desperate litigation—the country has already elected a new president. Just look at *The West Wing*'s Nielsen ratings. He's a fire-breathing orator, a Nobel laureate in economics—and he's almost as inspiring as FDR. Too bad Martin Sheen is only in office an hour a week.

MY 16-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER, ELIZABETH, has recently given up *Dawson's Creek* for *The West Wing*. While you may not think this is of get-clean-for-Gene magnitude, that could be because you did not live through the grip of *Dawson's Creek* last year.

When we stood together the other evening at the Kennedy Center, where President Bartlet had gone to hear the Icelandic Symphony (he had, in his sharp and straightforward way, insulted the Icelandic ambassador and was now making amends), my studious but glamour-inclined daughter compared the moment, with only slightly conscious irony, to when Bill Clinton came to Washington and met John Kennedy.

Watching all of elite Washington turn out for the Kennedy Center event—the men with trench coats over black tie, the women in gray gowns, the various Secret Service details and swarms of D.C. motorcycle cops, along with Sam Seaborn, the president's deputy director of communications, outside on a cell phone, and C. J. Cregg, the White House press secretary, checking her makeup—I was startled to suddenly remember the time my own father had brought me to Washington. I remembered the feeling, the message: This was it; you could get no higher, do no better, achieve no more.

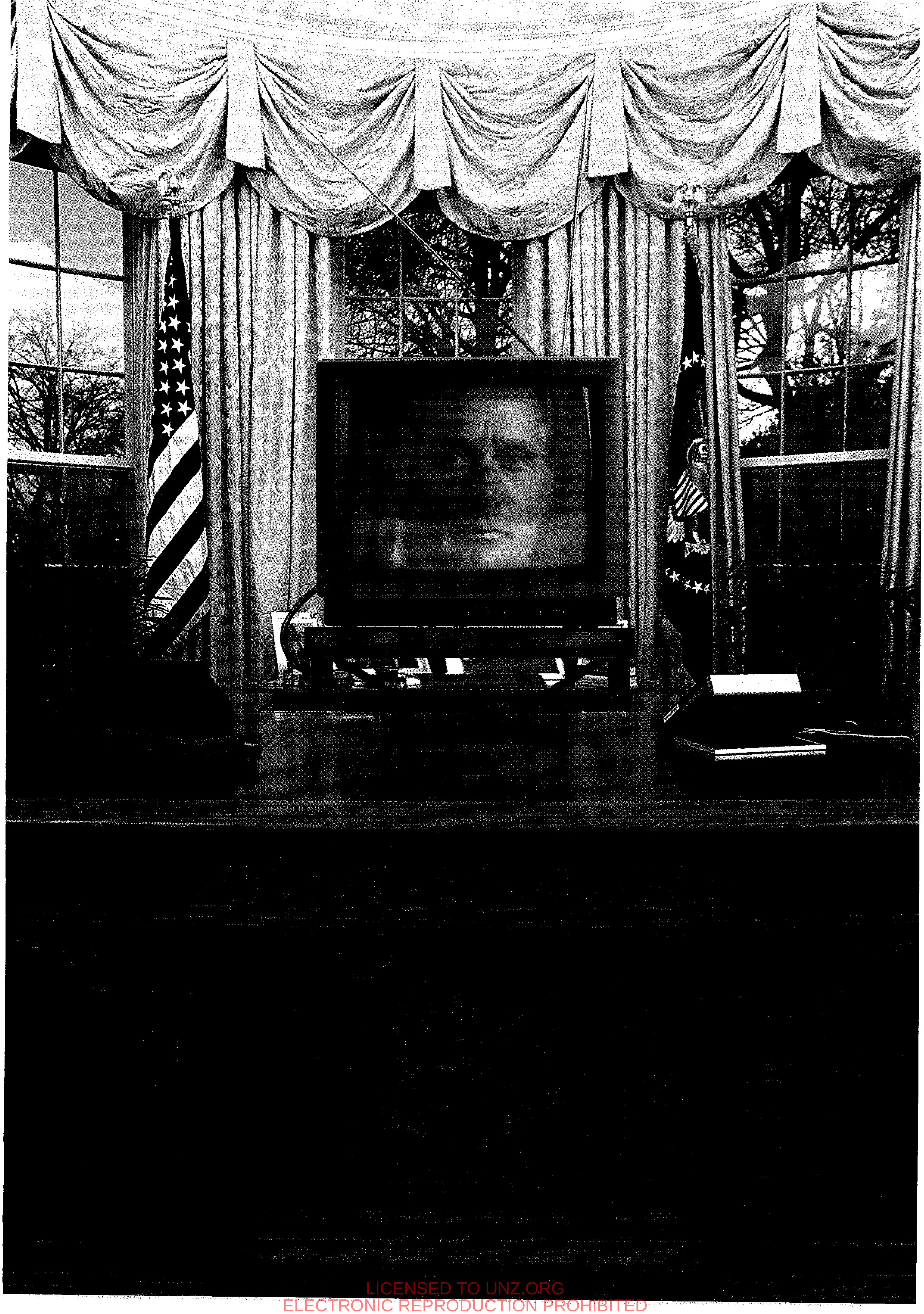
"Everyone have their mark?" screamed an assistant director to elite Washington, which, having exited the Kennedy Center regally once, backed up and exited regally again.

"*This,*" I said gesturing to the actors, "reflects that"—I indicated Washington—"which comes to reflect this again," I said to Elizabeth by way of explaining postmodernism.

"Well, I don't care," said Elizabeth unambiguously. "This is so much better than that. A president should be like President Bartlet. People who work in the White House should be like Sam Seaborn. That's so obvious."

THE INTUITIVE THING FOR AN AGE IN WHICH political entropy is so extreme that we cannot express a presidential preference would be some really evil-ish satire, a torment aimed at the bland, self-interested pasty boys who run the big show. Something *MacBird*-like. But, perhaps not unforeseeably, the counterintuitive prevails. *The West Wing* presents politics as the last (and certainly the most) honorable profession. You could not, even satirically, create a portrait more at odds with reality than *The West Wing* is at odds with the current political world. The daily news is a demented piece of ridicule; *The West Wing* is the wholesome commonweal.

ILLUSTRATED BY JOE ZEFF



Indeed, it probably doesn't matter much who—if anyone—becomes president in January because the real president will be Josiah Bartlet. All actions, therefore, taken in the actual White House will be confounded by the problem: How will what we do here compare to what's happening on the show, and will we come off worse? You can, with not too much difficulty, imagine *The West Wing* replacing national politics or offering some preferable parallel world, like a sort of benign Manchurian candidate. And there's nothing much real politicians will be able to do about it.

The other radically unintuitive thing is the idea that a show about politics could even make it onto the air—suggesting a deepening complexity in the Hollywood-Washington relationship and, no doubt, a further dissociative condition on the part of most Americans (we've arrived at the point where we can have fantasies about politics because we've lost all pretense of being engaged in the reality).

Hollywood, of course, likes politics. Or at least it likes Democrats. Or at least it likes Bill Clinton. Hollywood and Washington may be the last enclaves to still be interested in politics. It is even a status thing in the movie business to have worked in politics. Harvard to Washington to Hollywood is a good career trajectory. But politics, as everyone in the media business knows, has not, in long memory, worked as entertainment (at least outside of the thriller category). Politics is virtually the antithesis of entertainment. Indeed, politics works less and less even as news—at best it's a specialized interest for an older, less desirable demographic.

The idea of a television show about the White House in an hour-long drama format, which, given the vast attendant costs, needs the broadest possible audience that exists in any medium today, is, at best, unbusinesslike. That it actually got into production and on a network schedule initially seemed like some serious Hollywood–DNC–Time Warner–support-the-cause logrolling.

Or worse: This was Hollywood vulgarity. If the pinnacle of a Hollywood career was to sleep in the Lincoln Bedroom, then, by God, Hollywood would create a better, bigger Lincoln Bedroom.

No question, *The West Wing*'s set designers produced not only an exact White House, but a substantially better one. Larger, cleaner, sharper—in some sense realer (with better technology too; they don't hand out wafer-thin laptops in the real White House).

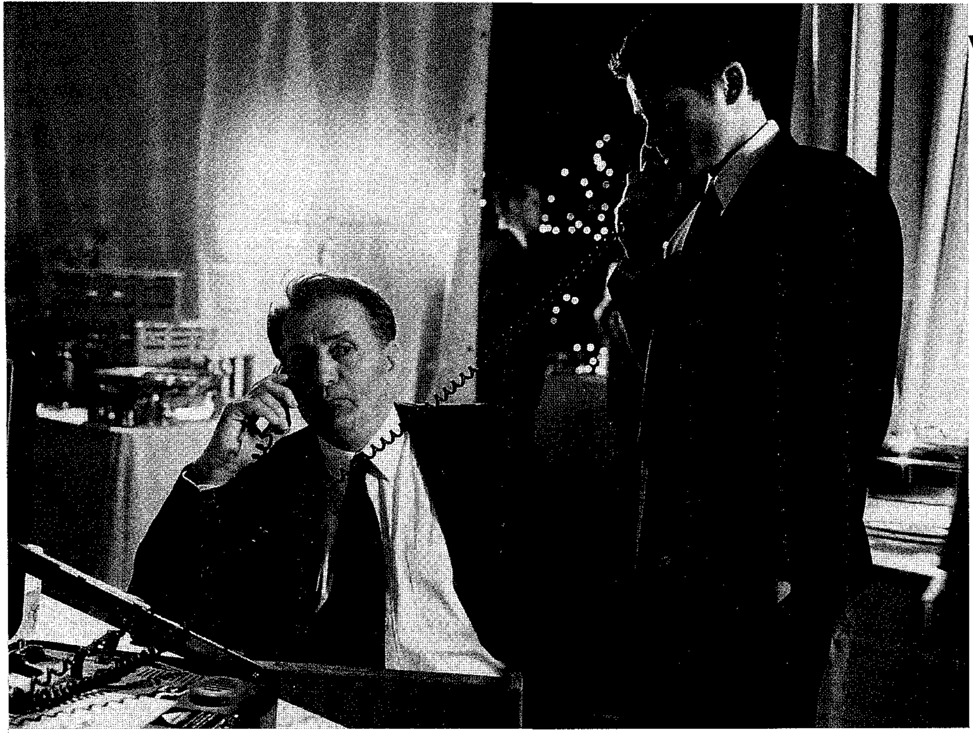
A cavalcade of big media, big political types, plus Chelsea Clinton, toured the set this summer during the Democratic convention, with everyone marveling at the infinitely better proportions and appointments in the Burbank White House.

Jackie Kennedy and Sister Parish had nothing on these White House designers.

So: a television show inspired by the Clinton White House, which then recruits people from the Clinton Whit House to work on the show, which the produces a version of life as it might hav been if you could have remade not onl the nature of politics but the nature o Bill Clinton, and which now has officia Washington in paroxysms of self-congratulation.

To be sure, *The West Wing* does not i the least rise above the limitations of it genre. It's a television set piece, something entirely formulaic, earnest, goody-goody, proud of itself, overproduced And exactly for these reasons, it may b on its way to being the most importan political document of the age.

Like a lawyer show or cop show o doctor show, it begins to create an entertainment distortion field that not onl changes the way we view reality (peopl now regularly show up in emergenc rooms instructing nurses and doctors o how they ought to be doing things), bu changes the behavior, affect, and self-image of the people who work in these jobs We will soon be looking for *West Win* traits in real candidates—Sam Seabor is the face of can-do.



The hot line: Martin Sheen and Rob Lowe.

Because it has appeared at just the moment when politics as we know it is in the act of some weird Velvet Revolution type of self-destruction, *The West Wing* could well earn a historic place in the reinvention of political culture—even though it is, quite clearly, not about politics at all.

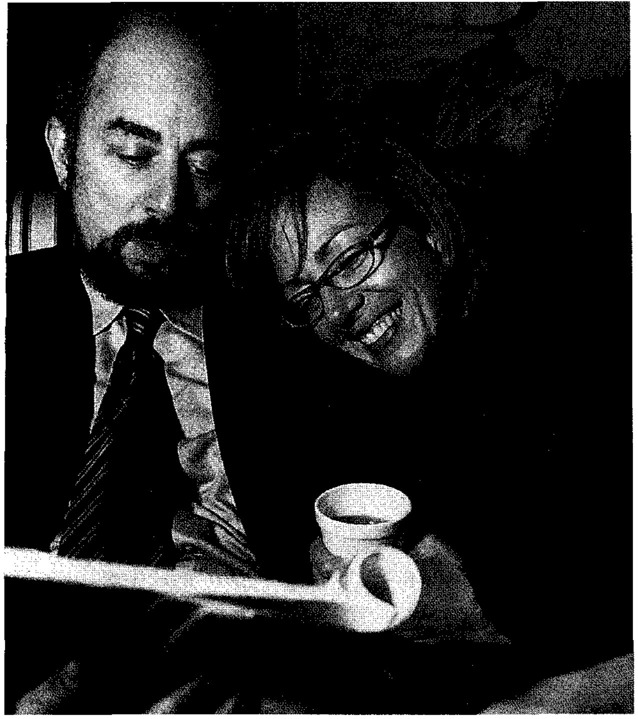
"HARVARD TO WAS

POLITICS IS ABOUT IMPERSONAL STUFF—it's about the needs and the annoyances of large numbers of people (Medicare, Social Security, prescription drugs—by all appearances, politics is increasingly about large numbers of annoying old people). Even the personal (abortion, health, morality) becomes impersonal when it becomes political.

And in the media age, the face of politics has become ever more distant, practiced, phony. No one has to be told that it's all P.R.

Politics has become—perhaps it has always been—about behaving properly in public. It's ritualistic behavior. It's about maintaining an illusion that is less and less consequential to anyone but politicians (this was the root of the great impeachment schism).

The world changed—social relationships, behavior, interpersonal sophistication, emotional self-awareness, the general vibe, what people talk about with each



Talking points: Richard Schiff and Allison Janney rehearse.

GTON TO HOLLYWOOD IS A GOOD CAREER TRAJECTORY."

other changed. But politics stayed the same—disconnected, uptight, repressed. Part of the present mess results, no doubt, from the desperately unfortunate circumstance of having two candidates who are both at the extremes of the impersonal, each man with a phony family and religion and personal history, each stunted in his ability to make plausible eye contact.

The West Wing, on the other hand, is about what television is about: quickly formed relationships, hurried intimacy, sharp language, everyday dysfunctions, tense, emotional negotiating, juicy human failings and foibles (virtually everybody on *The West Wing* has personal issues that would exclude them from a career in politics)—everything they teach in screenwriting class.

In effect, *The West Wing* offers a new version of the smoke-filled backroom: characters far from their real and boring lives (of course, most of *The West Wing*'s characters don't have a life outside the office, including the president, whose wife is always away), in a hothouse setting, with the blooming of all variety of soap-opera loves and hates. This not only works as compressed drama and supplies any number of simultaneous narratives, it is what large numbers of Americans experience—or wish they'd experience—in their own office situations. We all work in hermetic environments, filled with fraught relationships, far from our so-called real lives. This is family.

WHEN I SPEAK TO AARON Sorkin, the 39-year-old screenwriter from Scarsdale who created *The West Wing*—his first major hit—he certainly doesn't want to engage in a political discussion. He admits to not being qualified—nor does he seem all that interested.

The West Wing isn't a political drama, he notes; in screenwriter, Hollywood-television-meeting talk, it's a workplace drama. Indeed, it is a sly and effective change of emphasis from his initial, more modest foray into politics, the movie *The American President*, which is a romantic comedy.

This is how it happened: After his series *Sports Night* became a critical if not a ratings success, Sorkin was lucky enough to get a lunch with John Wells, the *ER* producer, whom you had to be *very* lucky to get a lunch with. So Sorkin pitched Wells, as anyone obviously would, an *ER*-type show: a drama about senior staffers in the White House. Now, whereas most people would think *b-o-r-i-n-g*—like, Why not do a show about the thing that is the most irritating and the least interesting to the greatest number of Americans?—Wells saw the thing he was most looking for, a possible new sort of emergency room.

Crisis. Proximity. High purpose. Personal angst. Beguiling young people. Nothing, in other words, that has anything to do with politics.

Indeed, few of *The West Wing*'s various producers want to talk about politics. This is part of the reality mix-up: Like the *ER* people called upon to talk about health care, they protest that they really don't know anything about politics. On the other hand, if you start to think about it, if you really were staging a new kind of coup, a media coup, a kind of reverse *Wag the Dog*, not the government creating a fake film, but the film community creating a fake government, you probably wouldn't want to talk about it either.

Sorkin tries to deflect my question about the present mess and the relationship of *The West Wing* to the mess's potential outcome (what if it's a Republican administration?) with some screenwriter blah-blah about Aristotle's *Poetics* (screenwriters talk this way). He does, though, allow that the general political climate has certainly been good for the show—that the time "is just ripe for the cavalry to come riding in."

But then he can't resist. He rewrites the present mess, removing all the chaos, the bloated language, and the media mirroring and reduces it to pure story: It's *Fail Safe*. The first act has to do with the infallibility of the networks and the existing polling system. Then, in the second act, after the world and all our assumptions about it come undone, Katherine Harris, the villain, will, against all truth to the contrary, certify the inconclusive, premature vote—giving Bush the presidency. But, because evil never wholly subverts the will of good people, the counting goes on, spontaneously, rebelliously, into the night. By the morning, Gore comes into the lead. He's now leading in the electoral as well as the popular vote. At which point the decision falls to the Electoral College, and a few good men with the courage . . . etc.

IT IS NOT JUST FOR DRAMA'S SAKE THAT in Sorkin's version Gore is winning, and emerging heroically. In addition to being a Hollywood version of reality, *The West Wing* is a Hollywood Democrat's version of reality.

The West Wing is, with no apologies, liberal, relativist, left-leaning (although Peggy Noonan and Marlin Fitzwater are consultants, as are Dee Dee Myers and Pat Caddell). An issue recently was whether Mao ought to be quoted by President Bartlet. If real politics is necessarily always tethered to small town–ish Babbittry, this is the flip side: a White House of Eastern, liberal Jews (and a New England Catholic president), where the president's daughter dates (has sex with) the president's black aide. *The West Wing* defines the cultural difference between the Democratic blue states and the Republican red states—between a desirable media demographic and an undesirable one ("This guy sells dental supplies in the Twin Cities—how enlightened do you think he'll be?" asks Sam Seaborn—nailing the Democratic idea of the Republican half of the nation).

The fact that the viewing audience doesn't seem bothered by the bias might suggest what most of pop culture sug-

Photographs by Gail Albert Halaban/Saba.

"*THE WEST WING* ISN'T A POLITICAL DRAMA, IT'S A V

gests: People are a lot more liberal than they vote.

Or, following the Reagan historical model, wherein the character issue is so much better handled by actors than by politicians, of course even Republican voters would have no problem with Martin Sheen as their president. *The West Wing* extends the Reagan model—not just an actor changing careers and becoming president, but an actor who just plays the president becoming as potent a symbol as the actual president.

Sheen has been preparing for this role longer than most politicians prepare for the presidency. In *The American President,* the Sorkin-written precursor, Sheen played the chief of staff to Michael Douglas's president. Then, too, he's played both Kennedy brothers (connoisseurs of Kennedy mini-series debate whether Sheen was a better John or Bobby), not to mention playing John Dean in *Blind Ambition.* (Many *West Wing* actors have former political roles—C. J., or Alison Janney, played the teacher who was the Clinton–Travolta–Jack Stanton opening quickie in *Primary Colors.*)

In real life, Sheen is, eccentrically, not a limousine-liberal Hollywood Democrat. He is a radical Catholic. He was an apostate who returned to the Church, with Daniel Berrigan, the oft-imprisoned priest, as his role model. He gave the $200,000 he earned for his role in *Gandhi* to Mother Teresa. He himself is regularly arrested in the service of righteous causes. For his opening line on *The West Wing,* he walks into a dispute with the religious right and quotes the First Commandment: *I am the Lord, your God, thou shalt worship no other gods before me . . .*

He is, forcefully, not Clinton.

Possibly he is a version of Bobby Kennedy—some imagined, older Bobby. He is Roosevelt-like too. Or the twinkling eyes are. What's more, his President Bartlet suffers from multiple sclerosis, which the country, to be distinguished from the audience, does not know about. Like Roosevelt's polio.

Sheen converts all of the usual pitfalls, the sentiment, the sanctimony, the earnestness, even the overly windy dialogue of political dramas, all of which are present here, into some effective and compelling and pure type of liberal social realism. This is a picture of politics as how it should be. Here is a president as decent, as human, as robust, as any farmer or steelworker in the thirties.

Certainly, it has been many years since a president has been played as anything other than a falling-down loon or a craven maniac, much less as a father, husband, professor, Nobel Prize winner (in economics), larger-than-life philosopher-king, as well as, occasionally, angry man ("I am going to blow them off of the face of the earth with the fury of God's own thunder," he says about some terrorist group that has downed a plane carrying his personal physician).

What we have is the complete absence of irony and cynicism. President Bartlet is fully idealized. And yet it is an oddly, or beguilingly, credible portrait. We seem to want it to be, anyway.

WHILE PRESIDENT BARTLET IS THE opposite of Clinton, he probably could not have existed without Clinton. Through Clinton we got the first glimpse in the modern age of the real White House, with recognizable and identifiable people working there—in addition to having unseemly office romances there. Imagine trying to idealize the already overly idealized Reagan years—propagandizing the propaganda. You needed a real White House to build your fantasy on. You needed a flawed man to redeem. You needed an act to clean up.

Next to Clinton, it is the spirit of George Stephanopoulos that hovers here. Stephanopoulos created the archetype of a senior staffer with top-flight mass-media appeal. Before Stephanopoulos, political operatives were specialized figures, at best character actors—too regional, too rarefied, too rough, too cynical. Peggy Noonan, Marlin Fitzwater, Lyn Nofziger, Sidney Blumenthal, James Carville, and Dick Morris are too much their own caricatures (the one over-the-top killer political-op character in the show, Mandy, based loosely on Mandy Grunwald, was dropped after the first season). In Stephanopoulos, you had a young, upwardly mobile everyman in the White House.

When Sorkin went to the White House to do his research for *The American President,* he spent fifteen minutes talking to Stephanopoulos "in this small office where he's eating food off a tray," and found that they're the same age and, to his surprise, that they have friends in common—the writers David Handelman and Eric Alterman, whom Sorkin knows from Scarsdale High. "We're talking there just like we might be talking in my college dorm room."

There you have it. It's a yuppie thing, which is the necessary background for all workplace dramas—upward mobility and professional achievement provide the underlying tension. It's yuppie social realism, zooming in on, and resolving, the quintessential yuppie (as well as American) conflict: How do we get what we want, when we want it, while still seeing ourselves as the last best hope for man?

These are attractive young people. Young (Sam Seaborn is only eight years out of law school—Dewey Ballantine to the White House). Well educated (casual in their snobbery about their educations). Hip. Funny. Jeans and old sweaters in the White House. Fast on their feet. As well as virtuous (independent men with more than self-interest at heart, taking control of the government).

For the first time in several generations, politics becomes aspirational.

Plus, they banter. The art of banter, which is both a workplace and television writer's art, the true insider's patois (there's a special rhythm to the banter in the show, a staccato syllabification), may be at the heart of *The West Wing*'s success. For a generation now, the coolest banter was movie banter. But the thing with banter is it's probably not the place so much, or the job, but the talk itself, the lingo, that is compelling.

That's the idea: Give politics a hip language.

It signifies the most powerful thing in America today: This is a cool place to work. *The White House is a cool place to work.*

But then the show goes a step further: This workplace is not just cool, but redeeming.

The White House, at a right-angle camera shot, under the blue sky and bright sun, then lit against a black velvet background, with *Bonanza*-like opening music, has never looked so good. (I have a friend who maintains that the Hay-Adams across the street has raised its rates for White House view rooms since the launch of *The West Wing.*)

The iconography—under the portico, at the president's desk, in the private quarters—is not just Kennedy, but David Douglas Duncan, the Kennedy photographer. The show has perfect pitch when it comes to image.

Not only is the White House a place you want to be, but the various *West Wing*ers, including President Bartlet, are always throwing people out of it.

That's the message: If you're inside, you'll feel good about yourself. "The president's asking you to serve, and everything else is crap," says the former pill-popping, alcoholic chief of staff.

IF YOU DO ONE OF THOSE UNNATURAL consecutive-viewing sessions, watching, more or less, all 30 episodes shown so far, from beginning to end, you see the nature of the show change. No doubt this is the result of more comfortable writing and getting the ensemble thing going and having a firmer sense of what plays. But you also see a success thing at work. A sense of what might be able to be accomplished. It is as well the kind of thing that happens when a political movement or candidacy gets traction—now that you've scored with your base, how do you open it up? How do you go big?

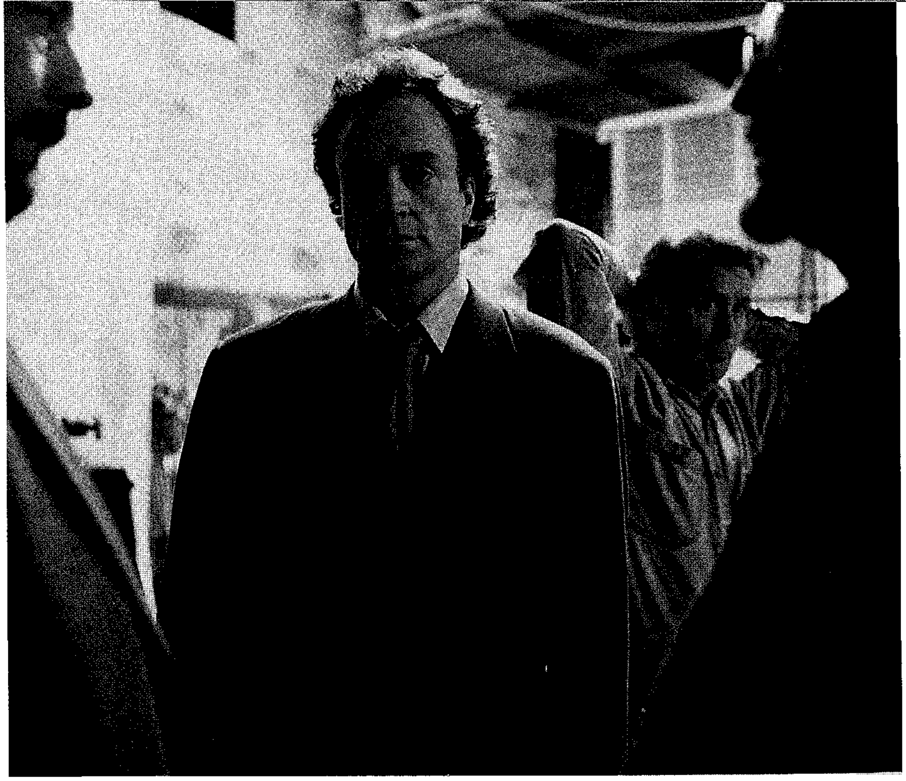
(PLACE DRAMA."

At the end of last season, you had a classic big-TV cliff-hanger. Shots ring out. This season opened with blood, emergency rooms, terrorists (a.k.a. Hollywood violence). And since then, to my mind, the sentiment has gotten broader, the cutting quicker but more precise (for a while last year, the cutting seemed to have an Altman-esque confusion), the characters more vulnerable, the issues more ripped from the headlines (the show has had a notable prescience in this regard, dealing with OSHA carpal-tunnel regulations 72 hours before this became a front-page *Times* story, and, many months before Gore had his "You don't have to be snippy" exchange with Bush, having President Bartlet's secretary accusing him of being snippy: "You were snippy." "I wasn't snippy."

This is all about seizing an opportunity to go for a No. 1 show—which may be where the real power in America lies. For Sorkin and Wells and company, one would suppose the power that concerns them is in the TV business.

Still, the political power must cross their minds.

If the show runs eight years and goes into syndication in a big way, muses one of the show's writers, then you would have a huge segment of voters who'd have been watching *The West Wing* for almost all of their voting lives . . .



A few good men: Bradley Whitford and Martin Sheen take a break during shooting.

IT IS AMONG MY DAUGHTER'S POLITICAL aspirations to meet Rob Lowe (that is, Lowe as the president's adviser). As we wait to meet him, I refrain from telling Elizabeth about his famous scandal and instead find myself talking about various politicians and what it is like to meet them. At the same time, there is no mistaking Lowe for a politician.

We see him at the Kennedy Center, on a cell phone, emerging from a black car, in tux, Armani overcoat, and, Elizabeth notes, Prada shoes. These are the fashion touches with which one makes politics cool.

His makeup gives him a kind of vampirish cast, which is oddly reminiscent of the Al Gore debate look, which, Elizabeth rightly surmises, means that Gore's makeup was not as wrong as people thought, but that he was lit badly. What Gore needed was the phalanx of technicians that has converged to film President Bartlet and Sam Seaborn at the Kennedy Center.

When we all sit down together, Elizabeth, holding her breath slightly, tells Lowe she's given up *Dawson's Creek* for *The West Wing*. He clearly understands the magnitude of that. We talk about the surprise and the vastness of *The West Wing*'s success.

"And especially here—we've been embraced by Washington. The cast is treated like rock stars," he says with some awe. (In order to be given the highest accord an entertainer can be given, in Washington, he has to play a politician.)

Politicians, when you talk to them, almost invariably have a distracted, I'm-listening-to-many-conversations-at-once look (except if you challenge them), whereas actors zero in on you, the eyes and smile entirely directed. So it's easy to begin to think of someone like Rob Lowe as not so much an actor as an unusually effective politician.

"Chelsea told me people are always asking her if the White House is like *The West Wing*. People tour the White House and they want to know where Sam's office is," he says—proud of himself, it seems, proud of his position.

But at this point, he tries to draw a line. He doesn't think people should mix up the show with reality any more than this. Politics is politics. Entertainment is entertainment.

And yet, you can perhaps see something else here, a shift, an undercurrent not unknown in Hollywood. Here is Lowe, the actor off-screen, picking up the bad dialogue of politicians. "I had a fifth-grade teacher stop me in a Starbucks in my hometown and say, 'Thank you, thank you for what you've done. You've changed my life as a teacher of government . . .' "

This reflects that which reflects this which reflects that . . .

Rob asks Elizabeth where she wants to go to college. He says his character went to Princeton.

Elizabeth asks Sam if he can write her a recommendation. ■

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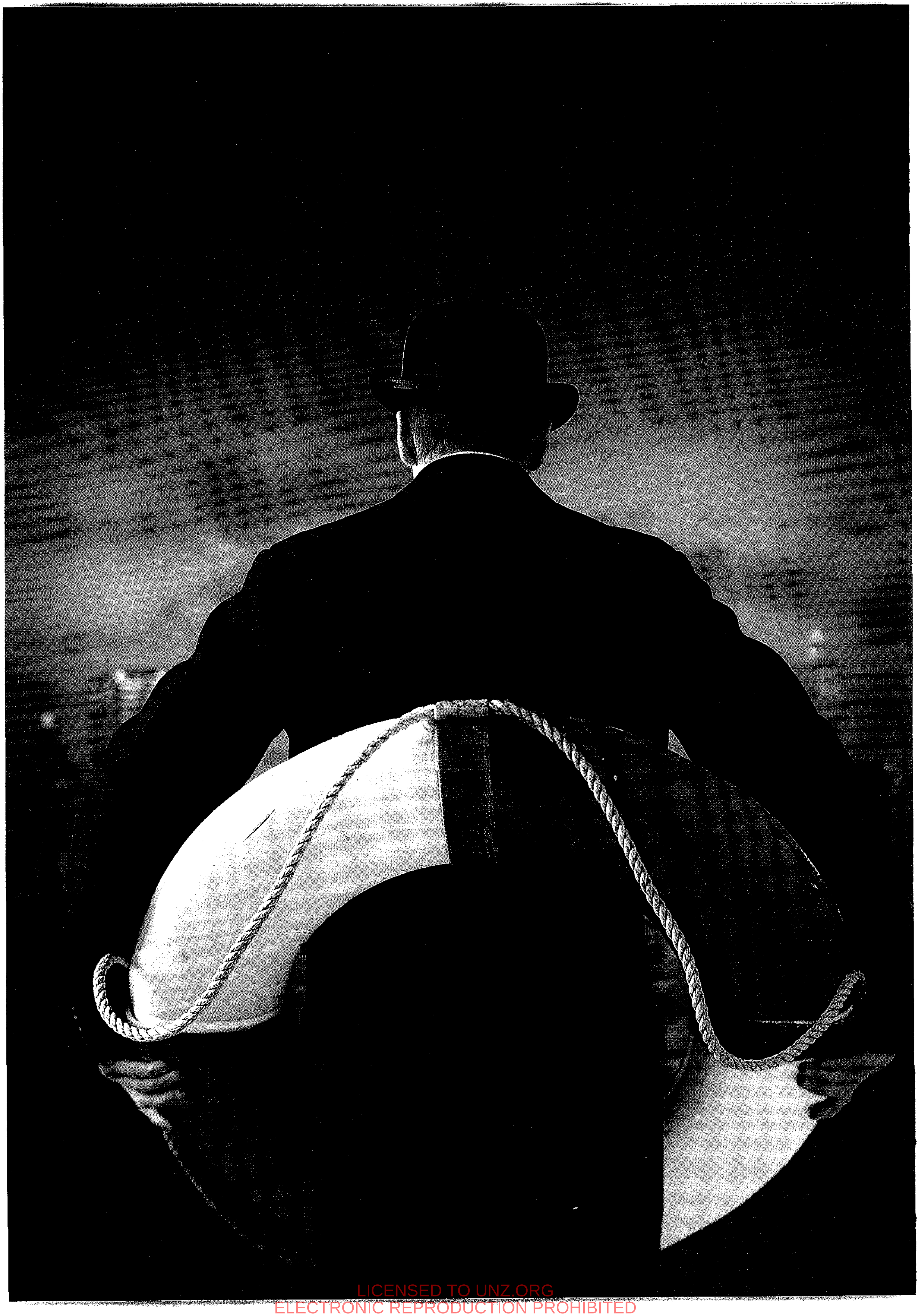
Photographs by Gail Albert Halaban/Saba.



LOOK OUT BELOW!

Nobody wants to say the word out loud, but the warning signs have become unmistakable. After nearly a decade of high-flying prosperity, a recession seems to be looming before us. Why isn't the Fed trying to avert it? And what can you do to protect yourself?

by James J. Cramer

IT STARTS WITH THE LITTLE things. Fifth Avenue merchants notice the crocodile handbags aren't moving as fast as anticipated. For-sale signs begin sprouting up on Chappaqua's lawns in unusual numbers. And all those head-hunters—did they just stop bothering *me*, or are they not calling *anyone* anymore?

Those are the first signs. Not massive layoffs or sob stories about bankruptcies and pensions stretched too thin. This downturn is sneaking up on little cubs' feet, not stampeding in like the bulls at Pamplona.

In fact, measured by the most visible economic thermometer—the nationwide-employment index—the country and the region still remain healthy, even a bit feverish. But by every other gauge, things are falling apart. Rapidly. That 4 percent employment number is not giving an accurate read on the mood of American business. It mocks the underlying weaknesses and, ironically, is creating the kind of false confidence that ensures that we slip into a recession as early as the second quarter of 2001 if the Federal Reserve doesn't do something to stop it.

You wouldn't know it from listening to the two guys whose dimpled chads are being recounted down in Florida. During the presidential campaign, both candidates sought to identify themselves with the continual prosperity—now just a hangover from a previous century. The irony, of course, is that while they were beating the hustings and talking about how to spend our newfound bounty, it was disappearing beneath their feet. The protracted postelection recount only prolonged the uncertainty, leading to a more fearful consumer and a harder economic landing.

The economic folk in the Clinton administration understandably seem prouder of what they see in the rearview mirror—deficit reduction galore—than what lies ahead. But from my trading turret, where I have to watch the price of the U.S.'s real merchandise change every day, and from my phone, where I listen to the pleas of hundreds of companies a week in conference calls about the state of their (faltering) business-

PHOTOGRAPHED BY BRIAN VELENCHENKO

es, I know what's happening. I've seen this pattern before, mostly in 1990, when no one expected a slowdown. No one. But we got a whopper anyway.

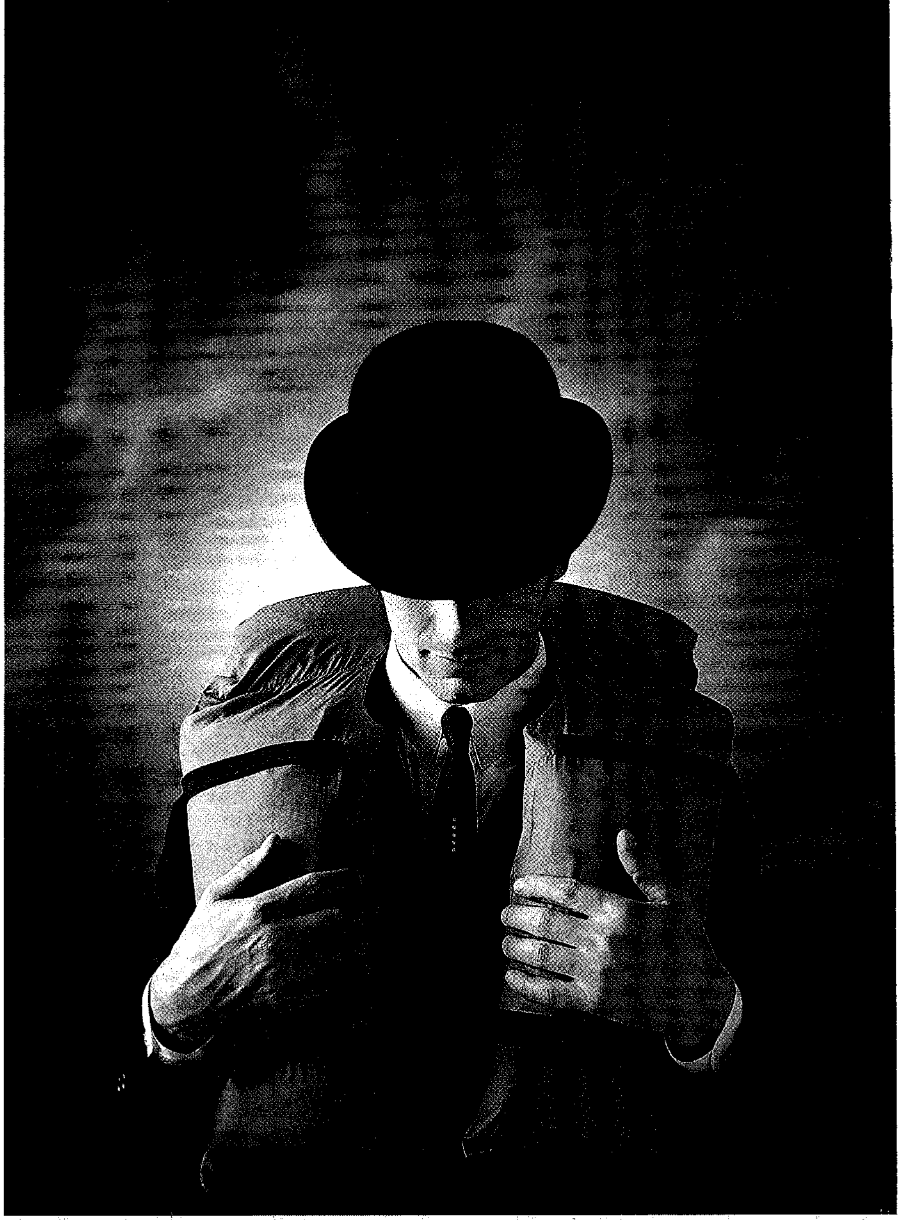
IF IT'S THAT OBVIOUS TO ME, WHY haven't you noticed the decline yet? First, business was so robust coming into 2000 that you can't expect a total about-face overnight.

Second, the instrument of the decline, the six rapid rate increases by the Federal Reserve over the past year and a half, was administered more to slow down the stock market, not to cripple the whole economy. Fewer increases would probably have done the job, and the economy would have had what we call a soft landing, but now a hard landing is in the cards because the Fed became obsessed with the rising NASDAQ and feared that it was about to produce a Japanese-style meltdown. (That's when everybody borrows money to buy stocks, and then the market crashes, destroying purchasing power for a decade and producing a permanent recession.)

The Fed just wanted to clobber the animal spirits in the stock market. By making money more expensive to borrow, it increased the risk for those who were buying high-flying stocks while margined to the eyeballs. Chairman Greenspan had to know that one of the unintended consequences of braking the stock market would be the breaking of the real economy, the economy that needs easier credit to stimulate consumer demand for goods big and small, cars, homes, and everything that goes in them. He knew that higher rates pause the real economy, not just margined stock jocks. But he couldn't stop himself. He was haunted by visions of the wrong turn made in Japan when its real economy got crushed by stock-market speculation, when yen that should have gone for production or purchasing got channeled into a too-vibrant stock market. The result? A vaporized stock market and a vaporized consumer. Greenspan *couldn't* let that happen here. Not on his watch.

Finally, New Yorkers are less likely to see the slowdown coming because the bonuses in New York were so bountiful last year that funds are still buoying the real-estate and vacation-home economy. But wait two months. The real-estate boom will be a thing of the past and so will all the other high prices it brought with it.

You might not want to join the bidding war for that $900,000 house in Jersey they sold for $400,000 six years ago, the last time things got tough in the securities business. I can't imagine that those Madison Avenue retail leases cut earlier this year will seem so smart a few months hence. And you may not have to call so far ahead for those hard-to-get restaurant tables. In fact, I would suspect that the busy spot market in Nobu restaurant reservations my former assistant once maintained may dry up entirely!



WHERE IS THE WEAKNESS CONCENTRATING? In consumer spending, that's where, which represents two thirds of our gross domestic product. Retail, as represented by Home Depot, Wal-Mart, BestBuy, Gap, May, and Federated—pretty much every major player there is—has turned radically soft. Every one of these companies has signaled a slowdown. That's an unprecedented across-the-board cry for help.

Alone, those companies couldn't knock the economy over. But the car companies are also crying uncle. Ford, with its crushing P.R. problems from the Explorer debacle, can't be expected to report good numbers. But it is the stunning tail-offs at General Motors and DaimlerChrysler, both of which would have been expected to take some market share from Ford, that have me more worried. GM's lots are piling up with cars and Chrysler is bordering on double-digit declines in sales. That's staggering. Particularly disturbing is the stagnation in light trucks. That's been the cash cow of this group through thick and thin, and supply has finally caught up with demand. And then some.

The automakers are all in hope mode, betting that sales will come back. But all that does is put more unsold cars on the lots, forcing lower prices and lower profits than expected. I suspect that sometime, hopefully after Christmas, they will come to their senses and address the markets in their own time-honored way: with massive layoffs. Just two weeks ago, we saw our first auto-plant idlings in ages, and our first are never our last. Maybe then it will become obvious to others, especially the Fed, that the economic landing will be the kind that comes when the landing gear gets stuck in the up position.

NORMALLY, AS IMPORTANT AS AUTOS and retail are, we would simply hide behind the strength in tech. *That's* been the real driver of the economy. Just not this year. The personal-computer complex—all the companies that devote themselves to that market—has faltered badly. The Net, last year's savior, now seems like a bad joke. And telecommunications?

"THE LAST STRAW WILL COME THIS HOLIDAY SEASON."

Well, let's talk about telecommunications. For the past two years, we have been in the midst of an unbelievable spending boom, as fourteen different telephone companies sought to build out their networks with the hope of selling you their data services. They all got financed with cheap debt because the capital markets were so robust last year after the Fed turned on the liquidity spigot—creating billions of extra dollars—to make sure we didn't falter during the Y2K transition. (Remember Y2K?)

Turns out, of course, that these companies then declared price war after price war, to the point where they are virtually giving away their voice lines to get your data business, but there isn't enough data business to go around. Now they need more money to finance their build-outs. And the capital markets, which were so generous to them for so long, are today, thanks to tight money, closed to anybody who needs money to grow. These markets financed more than $200 billion in high-yield bonds for telco build-outs in the past seven years, and now they are choking on the stuff.

In fact, these bond markets have almost stopped functioning *for anybody* because of the prospect (and reality) of massive defaults by these fledgling telco systems. It's a crisis that's not as grave as the S&L fiasco of the late eighties, but it has paralyzed the corporate debt markets far worse than anyone in that market ever expected. We wouldn't feel the pain of the investment houses over this telco paper if we didn't live in this area. But the debt market's woes will crush this year's bonuses throughout Wall Street.

I can't stress enough the tsunamilike effect this decline in corporate bond issuance and corporate bond trading may have on this area. This was the worst year ever for the old Masters of the Universe crowd, those once-titanic bond traders and salespeople featured in *The Bonfire of the Vanities*. When I was a young pup at Goldman Sachs, at about the time *Bonfire* was written, I can recall tortured trips in the elevator that we equity paupers shared with these Masters of the Universe bondies. They would brag about how much money they were printing as they collateralized everything but their mothers and sold them to pension, mutual, and savings-and-loan funds with massive fees built-in. I would moan about our lowly exposed stock commissions as I would watch these folks rake in ten times my take with hidden points that they buried in all their transactions. Fixed income ruled! That's always where the big money was. (You think Jon Corzine got all that walking-around money trading stocks for a living?)

But that market's been in an extended tailspin that started when Robert Rubin put an end to the massive Treasury auctions that used to so disrupt our financial markets on a regular basis. (He could do that, of course, way back in the nineties, because the government didn't need to borrow so much anymore, and because spending had at last slowed, and because taxes had finally been raised.)

The bond market took another hit when once-lucrative municipals turned into a small retail business because the government changed the rules and every two-bit metropolis couldn't issue them anymore.

But the real blow to the bond market came when Long-Term Capital, the biggest account on the street, collapsed along with all of its me-too counterparts at every major brokerage house. (These brokerages were often their own best clients!) When the Greenwich geniuses went bust, they took with them a whole echelon of people who did nothing but buy and trade bonds with leveraged capital supplied by the brokerages. When you take giant clients out and shoot them, you don't have any place to put the bonds you want to sell. So they don't get created. This year everything in the bond market came unglued because the biggest issuers, the telephone companies, ran out of money, and the biggest holders, the junk-bond mutual funds, lost their appetite for anything telco after a couple of large-scale bankruptcies.

Thousands upon thousands of people make their living in this city creating, trading, and moving bonds back and forth from one account to another. They are all simply trying to look busy these days. *They have nothing to do.*

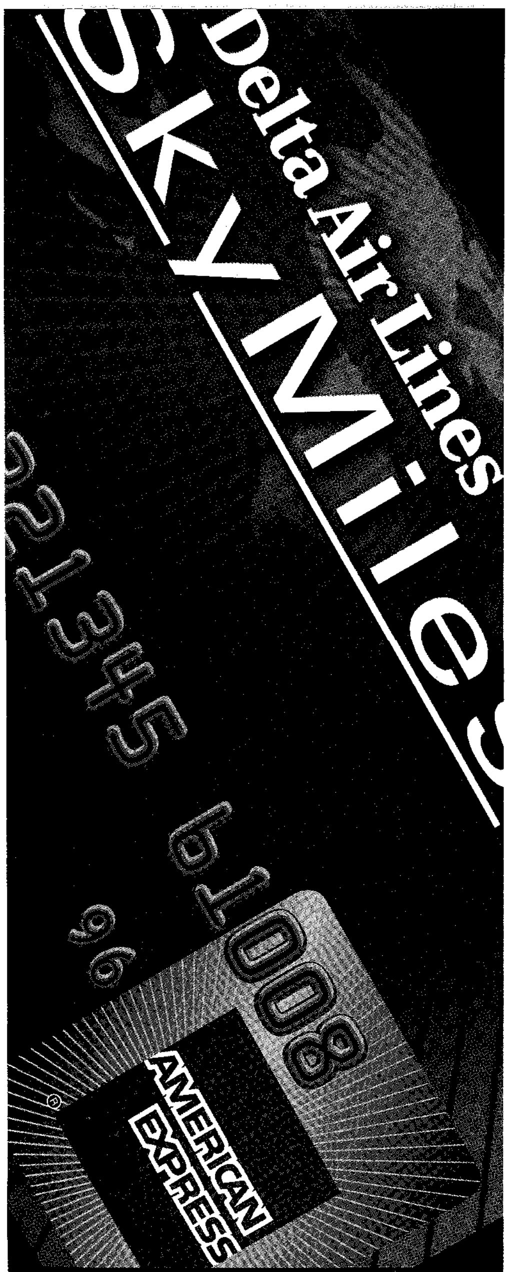
Their suffering will spread to all those who work in fixed income at all of the big brokerages, and the equity side won't be able to offset the losses this time, because the initial-public-offering market, so vibrant just nine months ago during the height of the dot-com craze, is now moribund.

Those equity folks aren't going to have much to do either. They used to plug their account base full of New Economy stocks that now look surprisingly like Old Economy stocks, meaning that they go down just as much as those fuddy-duddy industrials. Companies that venture capitalists fought over to invest in now go begging. The idea of tapping the public for funds for early-stage start-ups now seems like some sort of charming Disney fantasy. Unfortunately, the reality is that it happened 300 times in the past two years, and nobody has anything but losses to show for it. The real embarrassment is that Silicon Alley, which did its best to put itself on the map of New York's consciousness, today seems positively Blind, if not outright Tin Pan.

And it's not just *our* markets that are feeling the pain. During the past decade, whenever our economy went soft, we could always count on some of our overseas trading partners to help us out. But this time we have two macro concerns working against us: the euro and the price of oil. Ever since Europe switched to the euro, it has gone down, cutting off the purchasing power of a whole continent. And the source of that weakness? The high short-term rates the Fed put in earlier in the year, which make dollars a much more valuable commodity than euros. As long as those rates stay up, the euro stays weak and the appetite for our goods stays low.

We could handle that handicap if oil weren't so darned high. The rise in oil acts like a tax for everyone, but its pain is felt disproportionately by our Asian trading partners, who are all huge crude importers. As long as oil stays up, we can't count on Asia to take more of our exports than it is buying already.

NOW WE COME TO THE INEVITABLE result of all this, the weaker consumer spending that comes from the feeling—wholly created by the cooling stock market—that we just aren't as



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rich as we used to be. Sure, the stock averages are right about where we left them last year at this time, but the pain of knowing how high we were just eight months and 2,000 NASDAQ points ago seems to hit us right in the pocketbook.

The last straw will come this holiday season, which now looks as if it might be the weakest in years, and prospects are getting weaker as confidence is sapped by the presidential-election fiasco. Those companies that are hoping for a strong December to bail them out look increasingly like deluded dreamers unwilling to recognize that the now yearlong decline in the stock market is going to keep spending much lower than it was in the previous five Christmases past.

And what of the future? Next year, look for serious price wars in the retail sector as the great ones, the Home Depots and the Wal-Marts, try to finish off the competition. In housing, supply will catch up and finally overwhelm demand, though the superrich sellers will feel it worse. (Unless Bush manages to get into the White House after all, and he gives them all that tax relief!)

"NOT EVERYONE'S GOING TO MAKE IT TO THE NEXT TRENCH."

DOES IT HAVE TO BE THIS BAD? could something be done right now to put us back on course? Absolutely. If the Fed were to lower rates, it would correct just about every course that is going awry right now. The automakers could finance their inventories more easily, foreigners would have stronger currencies, the brokerage houses would have looser credit to help growing businesses, and the equity markets would be refreshed. But as long as employment—that great camouflage that papers over the real weakness—remains strong, it just won't happen. So the hard landing beckons and the recession that the U.S. has eluded so well in the past decade will hit us when we least expect it.

The consumer is no dummy. Without a positive signal from the Fed that it is more worried about a slowdown than it is about overheating, we all have to pull in our horns. We have to sideline our capital until the Fed undoes what it did to brake the stock market in the first place—by taking rates down to more reasonable levels.

But as long as the Fed is more concerned with inflation, as it reasserted this week, and the slowdown accelerates into a recession, we're going to need every penny we have to get through the short term and prepare to take advantage of the upcoming bargains. Because those who *didn't* plan for the future are going to be stretched too thin, and they're going to have to sell. Eventually, the Fed will change course and loosen the purse strings again. But not everyone's going to make it to the next trench.

In New York, it will never be as dire for the great middle as it will be for the upper end, because the thriving part of this economy is a cash economy, fueled by low-end job growth and a shortage of available workers to do the gritty jobs. The glut is at the highest end, the top corporate folks and their high-level associates who sold financial products.

My advice: Save a little more. Spend a little less. You will be able to get bargains in everything from stocks to homes, at prices that would have seemed like gifts just three seasons ago. Frankly, after the frenzied pace of the home-bidding wars and the nonstop rise in rents, a dose of tough Fed medicine may be what this economy needs to keep from pricing out all but the world's most affluent 30-year-olds. You may have to take less for your house when you sell it, but it shouldn't be too drastic, since there will always be anxious foreigners who want into our local markets.

I'll be riding out the storm by staying liquid, keeping my powder dry for when the Fed comes to its senses. That's when you'll need every penny, because *that's* when fortunes will be made in a very short time. If there's political gridlock, well, the markets love gridlock, so just hang in there, choose your moment well, and, if you can just manage to time it right, everything will turn out fine. ■

James J. Cramer is manager of a hedge fund and co-founder of TheStreet.com. His fund often buys and sells securities that are the subject of his columns and articles, both before and after they are published, and the positions that his fund takes may change at any time. Under no circumstances does the information in this column represent a recommendation to buy or sell stocks. Cramer's writings provide insights into the dynamics of money management and are not a solicitation for transactions. While he cannot provide investment advice or recommendations, he invites comments at jjcletters@thestreet.com.

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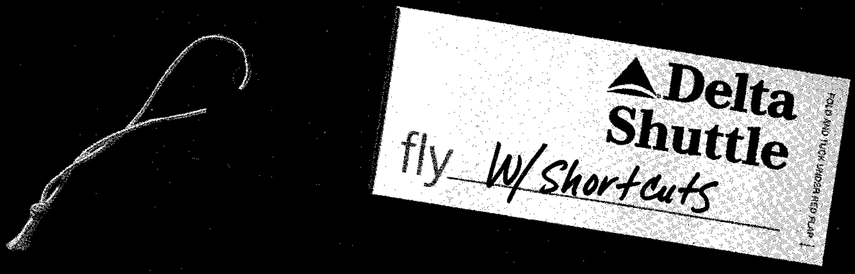
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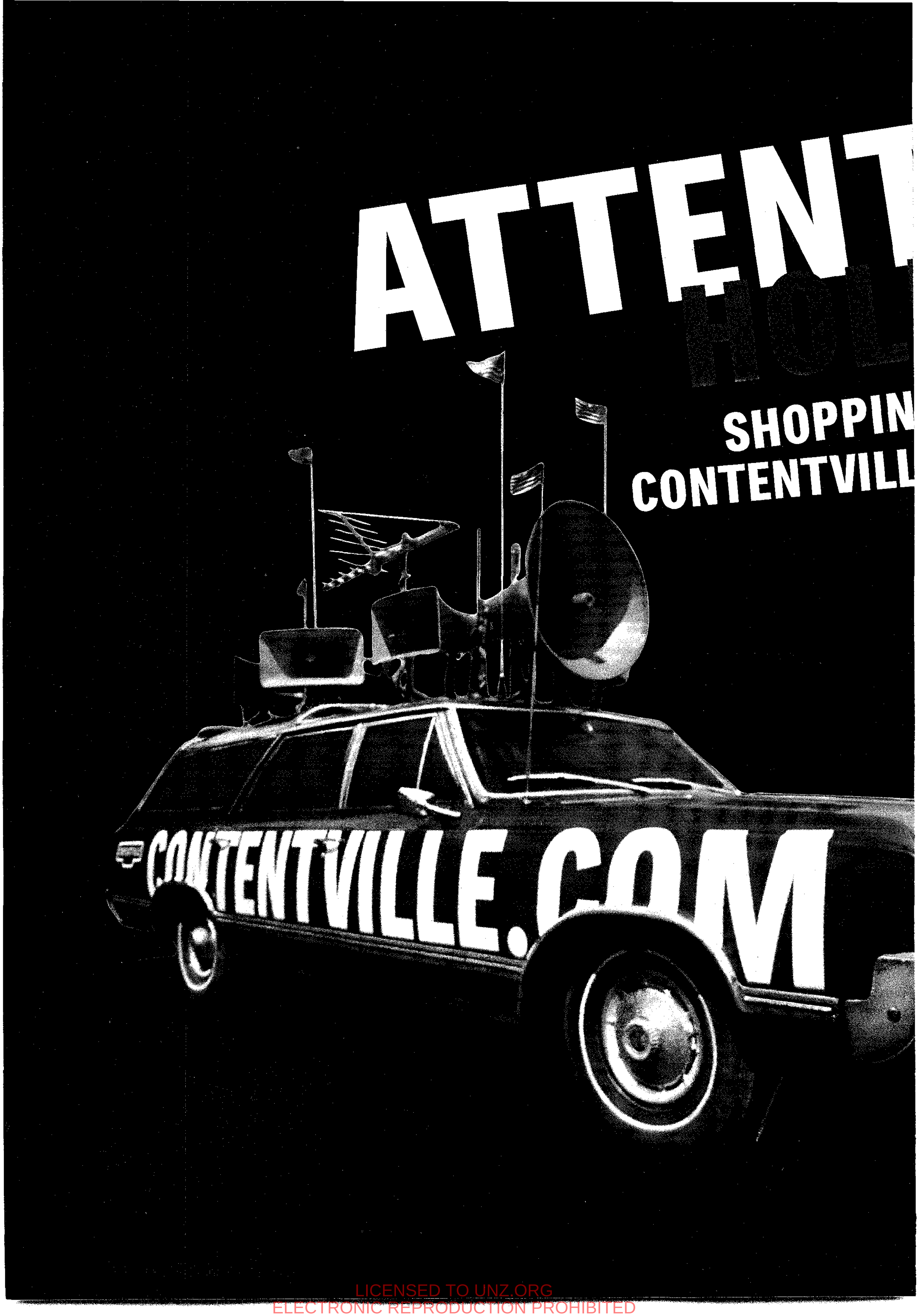
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By Vanessa Grigoriadis

The Model Vanish

Lourdes Gruart walked the runways in Milan and Paris for more than a decade. But as her career waned and she felt her jet-set social life slipping away, she became engulfed in paranoia, romantic obsession, and an enthusiasm for Santería. Then she disappeared.

LOURDES GRUART WAS 46 YEARS OLD, BUT SHE LIKED TO tell people that she had just turned 30. She didn't look quite that young, but her face was nearly unlined and her slim, five-foot-nine figure as taut as it had been on the Missoni runway almost twenty years earlier. "If that girl is still alive and she finds out that the papers printed her real age?" says a friend. "Watch out, 'cause there's going to be a lawsuit."

In many ways, Gruart lived the life of the 30-year-old she pretended to be. The walk-up that she'd recently moved into on East 83rd Street was the first apartment she'd lived in without a roommate, and the first she'd ever rented that wasn't a sublet. She had so few possessions that the 500-square-foot space still looked bare, and she had no plans to spruce it up. Gruart preferred to spend her money on other things: dinner at Bond St. and dresses from Bergdorf's, which she called "frocks."

The slang is a holdover from Gruart's days in the modeling world. Never able to scale the heights of supermodeldom, she was nevertheless a successful runway model for nearly a decade, working top designers' shows in cities throughout Europe. Gruart spoke four languages in clipped, elegant tones and looked the part—always dressed in black, flawlessly proportioned, with a long, light stride. Yet success eluded her in New York, where she would spend the latter days of her career. Here Gruart settled for sporadic paychecks as a fittings model for Upper East Side designers and showing off Neiman Marcus's latest lines to ladies' groups at suburban country clubs.

Lately, however, even that type of work had dried up, and Gruart had decided to take a real job, in the apparel division of Winston Staffing, a midtown head-hunting agency. On a salary of $45,000 a year, she worried about the $1,500 monthly rent on her new apartment, particularly now that she had her younger brother, Mario, 31, staying with her, though he promised he'd just crash on the couch for a few weeks.

To all appearances, Gruart's days were full of head-hunting work, browsing at chic boutiques, and pedaling on a stationary bike at Equinox while flipping through fashion magazines; her nights were spent with friends at hotel bars like The Four Seasons and the St. Regis, where she always began the evening with a glass of champagne. Yet, in the late afternoon on Saturday, October 14, Gruart returned from the gym with the news that she was

PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY JEFF COWEN

es

leaving immediately for a modeling job in Europe, says Mario. Happy to see her so elated, and happy that he didn't have to sleep on the couch for the time being, her brother wished her well. Gruart grabbed a bulging green duffel bag, he says, and headed off.

It was two weeks before she was reported missing, by a girlfriend more concerned that Gruart hadn't picked up her last check than that she hadn't shown up for work. When detectives arrived at her apartment, they found Mario in a cream-colored easy chair, eating Cheetos and watching TV. He seemed surprised to see them, and insisted that he expected his sister back from Europe any day. Police found his demeanor strange enough to begin an investigation, and soon found that much was amiss. Not only had Gruart's passport expired, but she had also left behind her modeling book, a large black portfolio that no model traveling on assignment would forget. Moreover, Gruart's couch had vanished. Mario said he put it out on the curb a couple days after Gruart left for Europe, and while police traced the pickup that day to a New Jersey landfill, they haven't been able to recover it. Mario says that his sister asked him to get rid of it, that there was a new one on the way. The new couch has never shown up.

Assuming the worst, police dragged the East River in a search for her body, to no avail. They called her mother, who flew up from Florida but could offer little new information. They took apart the kitchen sink in Gruart's apartment, and tested all over for blood with UV spray, which has left large, lilac-colored splotches on her white walls, on her light switches, on the handle of the refrigerator. "It's nice, I guess," deadpans Mario, "that they repainted the apartment."

The case was turned over from the local 19th Precinct to a special task force at Manhattan North Homicide. Hoping to get a confession out of Mario, or at least shed some light on the situation, detectives questioned him for two days before giving up. "I don't know what happened to my sister," says Mario sadly. "Unless you want me to make up some crazy science-fiction stuff. If she came through the door right now, I would be hooting and hollering for what was done to me. Because I shouldn't have had to go through that."

In the month since Gruart vanished, she's merited only a few days of stories in the tabloids and a couple segments on the ten-o'clock news. She is being replaced on her job; her sudden disappearance has not resulted in any candlelight vigils, neighborhood pamphleting campaigns, or offers of rewards. She is one of 1,600 missing people reported each year in the city. "This is like a nightmare," says Gruart's mother, also named Lourdes, in broken English from her home in Florida. "Sometimes I think she's not here and then I think she's still alive. I don't know." She is quiet for a little while, the desperation clear in her labored breaths. "I don't know Mario so well no more."

“Lourdes would say, ‘If you can’t

MODELING WAS GRUART'S LIFE. SELF-possessed from a young age, she began in her teens at the Miami International Merchandise Mart, a seasonal fashion show for Florida buyers. The eldest and prettiest of three sisters, by 14 she was already five-feet-seven, with thick brown hair, sparkling brown eyes, and legs that stretched so long, the top half of her body seemed small. The family's first son, Mario, was named after her father. He was born when Gruart was 15, and she doted on him as she did her other siblings, Gloria and Alicia, conjuring up dinners of navy beans and onions and showing them new ways to fix their hair.

Gruart was born in Havana, to a well-off father who had already been to the U.S. for an architecture degree at Ohio State. Her anti-communist parents abandoned the country as Castro gained power, moving to El Paso in 1960. The family moved several times over the next decade, from Texas to North Carolina to Alabama, before settling in a pastel ranch house in Plantation. Though Gruart complained about sharing a room with one of her sisters, the family lived comfortably—Sunday barbecues after church, a dachshund named Mabel, a neighborhoodwide party on Christmas Eve. Gruart, whose childhood idol was Jackie O., had her happiest moments as a cheerleader and at the prom, where she was in the Homecoming Court.

After high school, she spent four years at the University of South Florida in Tampa, studying international affairs. She modeled for local boutiques and danced in a ballet troupe, with which she flew to New York for the first time. Hooked on the city, Gruart headed back after college, working as a hostess at several restaurants and trying to model.

In the fall of 1983, she was lured to Milan, where it was easier to get work. It was only six years since the top Italian design houses had relocated north from Florence, and the scene was still new and exciting. Gruart moved into a residence hotel in the heart of the old town and was signed by Why Not?, a small yet prominent agency It was a glamorous life, but not entirely lucrative: Rates were often low, about $200 a show. What she made she rarely saved, splurging on outrageous clothes and accessories. "Whatever was hip, whatever was hot, fierce, whatever, Lourdes had to have it," says a friend.

Every night was the same for Gruart's crowd, starting with dinner at Leone's, a chic yet informal restaurant where they were welcome to stroll into the kitchen and check out what was cooking in the pots. It was all free for models, but Gruart rarely ate. "A little white wine and a pack of cigarettes," says a friend, makeup artist Donyale McRae. "Lourdes didn't eat—she perched." Around midnight, the city's playboys would show up, adding table after table to the party before escorting the women to discos like Amnesia, Plastique, and La Penta. They came with drugs; Gruart would smoke the occasional joint, but chronic sinus problems kept her away from cocaine. "Lourdes was a party girl, but a party girl with restraint," says McRae. "She wasn't sleeping around, but she made herself available to get the weekend at Como, the fabulous dinners, the open door at the club."

She was still in town a year later as the city was convulsed by scandal when American model Terry Broome murdered Francesco D'Alessio, the son of a rich Italian horse breeder. D'Alessio, a mean-spirited womanizer, had told Broome's fiancé that she had participated in orgies; when the fiancé demanded his engagement ring back, Broome, wired on cocaine, shot D'Alessio at point-blank range in his apartment. The story made headlines around the world, and American models in Milan panicked as policemen began stopping them to check their I.D. cards, sending home those whose visas had expired.

Gruart hid in her hotel with her best friends, African-American models who were still a novelty in Italy. Like her, they hadn't landed editorial jobs or ad campaigns, but their strut on the runway was electric. "All Lourdes's friends were black divas, and yet she always fancied herself a blonde, blue-eyed, corn-fed-type girl," says a friend. She idolized big blondes like Cheryl Tiegs and Christie Brinkley. In Milan, Gruart denied that she was Cuban-American to all but her closest friends. She told everyone else that she was a Spanish princess.

A favorite on the runway of designers like Missoni, Fendi, and Valentino, Gruart soon found herself on the European modeling circuit—Paris, Milan, sometimes even Tokyo. She rented an apartment in Paris in the 8th Arrondissement with Rebecca Ayoko, a popular St. Laurent model from Africa, and gained entrée to the highest echelon of the city's social world. Through Ayoko, Gruart became part of an "in" clique of black models including Iman, Grace Jones, Guinean model Katoucha, and Coco Mitchell, an ex-girlfriend of John DeLorian who would remain Gruart's friend for years. Gruart herself is said to have dated a slew of Persian playboys, as well as Gregory Peck's son Tony, and Stan Dragoti, Cheryl Tiegs's first husband, who was famously arrested en route to the Cannes Film Festival with 22 grams of cocaine in his suitcase and an ounce taped to his back. "She would never go out with just *anybody*," says a friend. "It always had to be a name. She'd say, 'If you can't do something for me, I don't want to know you.' "

omething for me, I don't want to know you.' "

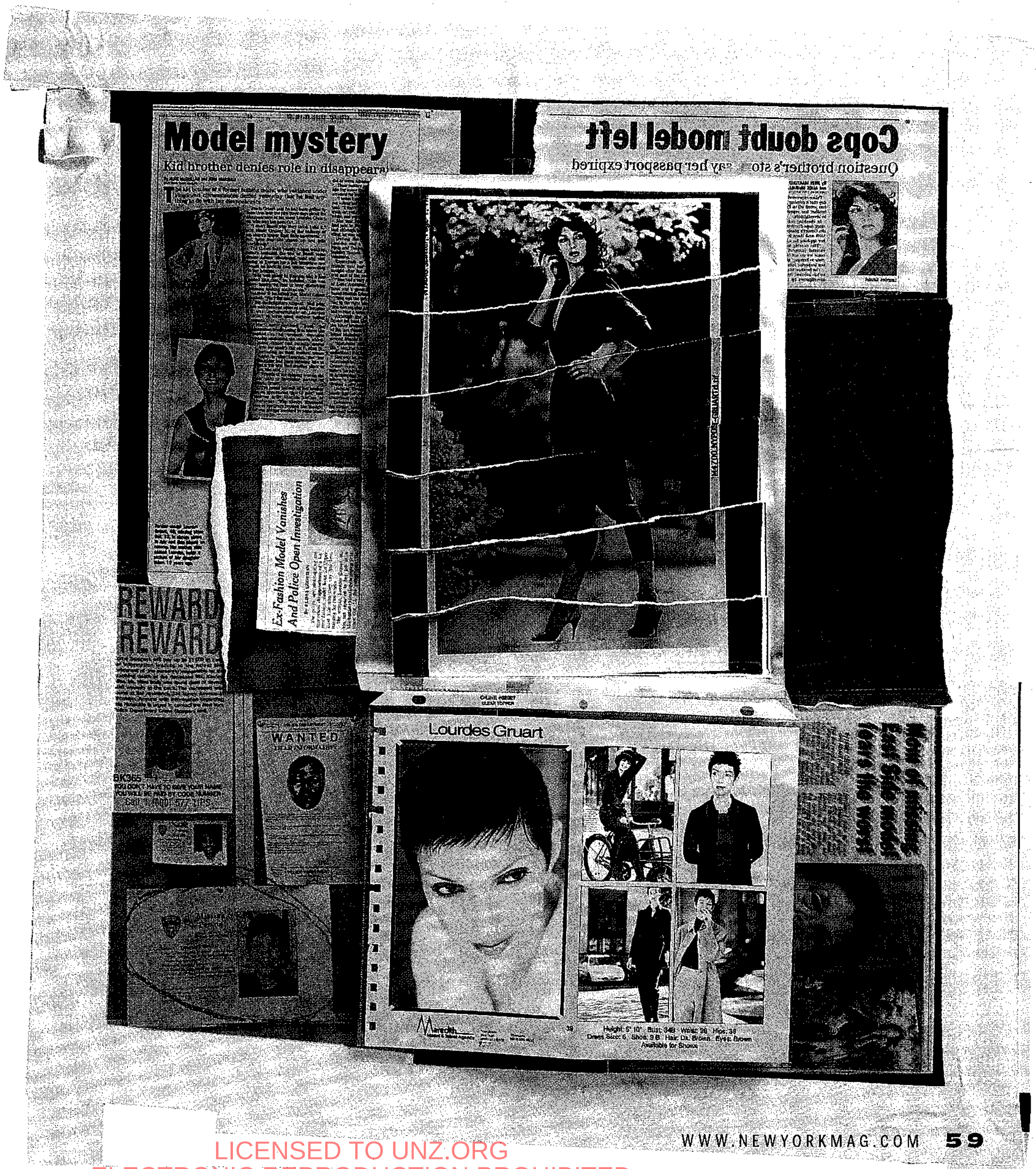
By the late eighties, however, things had started to change. "Photo models started to realize that they could promote their careers on the runways," explains Michael Gross, author of *Model.* Mannequins like Claudia Schiffer, Linda Evangelista, and Cindy Crawford started to edge out career runway girls like Gruart. No one cared anymore how well you could swing a blazer over your shoulder or how adeptly you could unbutton a raincoat. Gruart was also keenly aware that she was starting to age, and even started to include tear sheets in her modeling book from another, younger model who resembled her, Patricia Hartmann. Finding less and less work available, Gruart moved back to America in 1988.

Her passport expired that year, too.

GRUART'S APARTMENT IS ON THE fourth floor of a short tenement building on one of those way-east streets with a cleaner's halfway down the block and a pizzeria on the corner. The apartment is long and narrow, the size of half a subway car. There's no rug, no dinner table, nothing on the walls except for a dry brown leaf that hangs by a nail. Gruart didn't even hook up a phone, deciding to save money by using her cell phone instead. The television rests on a makeshift stack of Gruart's small collection of books: *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus; How to Get the Job You Really Want; The Nutrition Superbook;* and Kevin Aucoin's *Making Faces.*

The only other book in Gruart's apartment is Robert Anton Wilson's *The Illuminatus Trilogy,* but that belongs to Mario. "The thing I like to do with books," he explains, "is not really read them. I just open up to a certain page and look at the words there. Then I make up a poem with those words. I find that works better for me."

Mario speaks in a soft, calm voice as he sits cross-legged on the hardwood floor in Gruart's apartment, his long legs curled beneath him. He's a head-turner, with the high cheekbones and doe-eyed look of a model, his long brown hair hanging in a loose ponytail over the shoulder of a bright-orange fleece pullover. When he moved up to New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Lourdes Gruart

York from Florida six years ago, Gruart sent him to Boss Models, Marcus Schenkenberg's agency at the time, and though it's said they liked his tests, he never followed through.

Although Gruart was already away at college by the time Mario was 4, she is said to have had warm feelings toward her brother. When he couldn't scrape together the money to move out of their parents' home, Gruart lent him $1,000 so he could move to Miami, then $500 a week later when he had blown it all. "It was always, 'Oh, Mario, he's still finding himself,' " says a friend. "But she also said that he had the most terrifying temper."

On this sunny afternoon nearly three weeks after Gruart's disappearance, Mario has been sleeping in her bed, an unmade queen-size with beige sheets that hardly fits in her tiny bedroom. In fact, he's made quite a mark on the place. Among many changes, Mario has moved Gruart's glass coffee table into a corner of the living room, covering the surface with a tableau of 50 or so of his knickknacks: Buddha figurines, slate-gray rocks he collected from the Central Park lake, a knotted lock of his hair. "I put all that out to please my own eyes," he says by way of explanation. Anything personal of Gruart's, like her modeling book, he's stuck underneath the kitchen sink.

The only part of the apartment that seems to be intact is Gruart's closet, which is packed with designer clothes, most freshly dry-cleaned and in their plastic wrapping. On the top shelf of the closet are dozens of white Tupperware bins of shoes with masking-tape labels on them reading STRAPPY GOLD GLITTER HIGH-HEELED SANDAL and LOW BENDEL'S BLACK. But there's no underwear or lingerie, and no makeup in her medicine cabinet. In fact, the only sign of life in the bathroom is a Japanese porn magazine. "I like Asian food, and culture, and girls," shrugs Mario. "I especially like Asian girls." Mario is unclear on what was in the apartment originally, what exactly Gruart took with her, what items of hers he may have thrown away. "I'm just living here and trying to make my own self more comfortable," he says. "Because this is the place that I am."

He may not be for long. November's rent hasn't been paid, and Mario has about $75 right now, so his plan is to stay only until Gruart's security deposit and first-month's rent run out. "I have to meet someone with whom I can become involved in a relationship," he explains matter-of-factly. That's the way he's survived in recent years, living with a series of women, and men. The only reason he moved in with Gruart at the end of the summer was because his benefactor at the time, an elderly man on Barrow Street, died of a liver disorder, right after Mario was arrested for possession of marijuana and resisting arrest. "He was an old man who drank two or three bottles a night," explains Mario. "He supported me in many, many ways. And I took care of him in what he needed."

In case he doesn't meet a new patron right away, Mario scans the help-wanted ads in *The Village Voice,* chewing on a yellow highlighter. "I got to figure out what to do; otherwise, I'm going to be on the street, or in a shelter," he says, running the pen over an ad for a dog-walker. "I'll do anything for money. I mean, I've done anything in the past. But my specialty is reptiles."

Mario's dream is to work on a breeding farm for snakes; he once had a collection, he says, of more than 30 turtles, some of which made their way into one of Gruart's earlier apartments—she took care of them for a year even though she complained about the stink. In lieu of real reptiles, Mario has strategically placed a few reptilian figurines around the apartment, on the arm of the easy chair, on top of the television. A snakelike Darth Vader, holding a red neon laser, stands watchfully on the window ledge next to Gruart's bed.

"I'll do anything for money," says Gruart's brothe

GRUART DIDN'T HAVE THE SAVINGS TO rent her own place when she returned from Europe in the late eighties, so she hopscotched around town, living in sublets with models she'd known from Milan and Paris or their friends. She first moved up to West 95th Street, into the apartment of Brenda Jordan, a model turned born-again Christian, who was often away doing missionary work in Guatemala. Gruart found work on the Greenwich circuit, modeling department stores' new lines at evening events in suburban towns. She was jealous of the new breed of supermodel, however, and was angriest about Linda Evangelista's success. Evangelista, she felt, was her "type," and she'd cut and color her hair to resemble the model's newest style.

In 1989, at a party prior to the Met Costume Institute ball, according to friends, Gruart met Bob Marx, the son of the Marx Brothers' Zeppo and the stepson of Frank Sinatra. They began to date, although she didn't believe it was exclusive on his end, and she'd often fly to Palm Springs with him on a private jet to visit his mother, Barbara Marx Sinatra. "She'd talk about how she came upon a trunk of Barbara's jewelry, thousands of things all mixed together," says a friend. "She said, 'You can't imagine the life Barbara has.' " After Marx, an entertainment lawyer, gave her a pair of Cartier earrings, Gruart told her friends that she was about to be engaged, though she also complained that she wasn't sure Marx's bank account was big enough for the lifestyle she wanted. (Marx did not return calls for comment.)

Yet when Marx broke up with Gruart a year later, she was devastated. She began attending Mass at Unbroken Chain and Times Square Church, and shopping at an even more frenetic rate. "I knew the Lord would not be happy with me in low-cut dresses, but Lourdes would buy beautiful things," says Jordan. "She'd say, 'I'm going to wear this to such-and-such party and make Bob *crawl.*' " Gruart wanted to be a member of the class of people who lived expensively, got their names in the papers, and did little else. She had tasted this life in

Photographs by Brian Finke.

Building a mystery: Lourdes Gruart's apartment house on East 83rd Street.

Europe, and she knew that in order to get it for herself, she needed to marry a rich and famous man. But for the first time, she was realizing that it might be more difficult than she thought. "She started to think that she wasn't going to end up a Park Avenue lady," says a friend. "Much less Jackie O."

In 1991, Gruart began to spend winters at her parents' home in Florida, commuting to Miami for trunk shows at department stores. She was well liked professionally and became part of the burgeoning social scene, going out to Thierry Mugler's parties at the Century restaurant and to Gianni Versace's first party at his new mansion. She tried to book catalogue or print work, to no avail, and resisted advice that she try to break into the Spanish market. "She had a $40,000 confirmed booking for a Coke commercial for Spanish TV, and she canceled at the last minute," says model turned actor Erik Fletcher, Gruart's best friend in recent years. "She was like, 'Eww, it's Spanish!' I was like, 'It's TV!' "

When she returned to New York full-time two years later, Gruart started working as a fit model for Upper East Side designer John Anthony. Though she'd remain there for three years, Gruart hated the job, and quit in a huff after the designer cut her wages and refused to include her in his runway show. (John Anthony would not comment.) She kept working here and there: an ad for Hackensack's Riverside Square mall, a fitting for Vivienne Tam, a few showroom bookings. "She really gave it 100 percent," says Ken Metz of NMK Agency. "Always kept her book current, did tests for new photographers. Most girls don't want to get out of bed for an unpaid test, but Lourdes was always willing." Without a regular source of income, however, Gruart began to grow desperate. "She even approached one of my best clients," says a model who had been friends with Gruart since the old days in Milan. "Told them she'd work for less than me."

It had been three years since her relationship with Marx had ended, and Gruart had started to obsess over past mistakes she'd made with men. She decided that she shouldn't have resisted the advances of one of Marx's friends, Mohamed Khashoggi, the son of Arab oil magnate and arms dealer Adnan. He'd once asked her to his home in Paris, she recalled; now she tried to follow up on the invitation, in vain. "Lourdes wasn't always the easiest person to get along with—she invented the word *high-maintenance*," admits Fletcher. "But once this Mohamed thing started, she became unbearable."

Panicked that she had missed out on her last opportunity to marry well, Gruart became obsessed with winning Khashoggi's affections. With Fletcher in tow, she would spend afternoons in Barneys looking for the perfect frock to make him fall at her feet. She'd plot for hours at Indochine, where she ate a light supper of egg rolls and champagne once a week. She even began calling her aunt in Miami for tarot-card readings—Khashoggi loved her, said the aunt, but someone was "standing in her way."

Soon she had an idea of who that person might be. A couple of sublets after she left Jordan's apartment, Gruart moved into Murray Hill with a redheaded Midwesterner who she thought was into Santería, the African-based religion that some of her Cuban relatives practiced. Convinced that the woman was performing rituals to prevent her from obtaining Khashoggi's love, Gruart forced her out of the apartment. She liked her next roommate even less. This one, she was certain, was a lesbian who was in love with her. Sick with nervousness about why things were going wrong in her life, Gruart no longer trusted anyone. "All these bitches are bringing me *down*," she'd say. "They're after my man, my frocks, my head."

Friends attribute Gruart's increasing sense of paranoia to a bigger problem, one that she could not make go away: Her modeling career was coming to an end. "People started to say, 'Now, how old is Lourdes really?' " says a friend. "Mama ain't 26 no more, and she ain't 36 neither." She had started to worry about her looks, complaining about age spots, saggy skin on her elbows, and spending hours putting herself together. No longer always able to afford her favorite salon, Warren Tricomi, Gruart settled for haircuts at places like Vidal Sassoon's training school, and she was often unhappy with the results. "She was so self-absorbed, but

Mario. "I mean, I've done anything in the past."

so insecure!” says photographer and ex-model Yvonne Allaway, a friend. “It was really sad. Girl needed to get a grip.”

Allaway helped Gruart write a résumé, her first, and through an old contact she landed a job with a head-hunting firm, the Saxon Group, in 1998. Remaking herself called for a new name, and Gruart rechristened herself “Lori.” “She was so excited,” says Fletcher. “She kept saying, ‘I’m going to work on Wall Street,’ even though the office was on Lex and 52nd.” Her salary was $25,000 a year, though Gruart thought she’d make $70,000 with bonuses; but the work was harder than she’d imagined, and she became despondent. “Anything I told her to do, she was giving me a frown and a fight. She’d say, ‘Whatever, whatever,’ ” says Stephen Sacks, president of the Saxon Group. “Finally, I said, ‘Lori, it’s obvious that you’re not happy. Would you like to leave?’ ” Gruart cleaned out her desk, but not without telling friends she’d sue for her 70 grand.

Increasingly sure that she needed a man to put things right, Gruart began visiting an elderly Spanish woman off Fordham Road who practiced Santería. She asked the woman to put a spell on Khashoggi or her newest crush, Barneys scion Gene Pressman, whom she’d started to fixate on after she applied for a job as a greeter at Barneys in 1998. “She felt that if Mohamed didn’t come through, she always had Gene,” says a friend. After the visits, say friends, Gruart would buy herbs and candles at a nearby botanica for her nightly rituals to appease the goddess of love and beauty. She would burn a yellow candle with the men’s names on a slip of paper underneath it while drinking a glass of wine.

“Is it weird that your sister disappears and you throw her stuff out? Yes. Is it a crime? No.”

Gruart’s trips to the Bronx became a monthly event, and then a weekly one. Even after she found a new job, at Winston, she’d insist that friends like McRae accompany her on her days off. Afterward, they would return to McRae’s Harlem brownstone for a powwow about Khashoggi, trolling the Web on his computer for new information. “She’d print out a picture of him from some Website and say, ‘Didn’t he look good, he had lost weight, he’s wearing funkier clothing,’ ” says McRae. “She had the idea that Adnan was going to send him to do a venture in Cuba, and she’d help out down there.” Yet several days after one of their marathon rap sessions, Gruart called a mutual friend in Spain to complain that McRae was not being supportive of her interest in Khashoggi because he wanted him for himself.

“And here I am in this seven-year relationship,” says McRae, a good-looking, well-built black man with long dreadlocks. “But I want Mohamed for myself. Right.” He lights a cigarette and leans back on a red damask couch in his gingerbread mansion of a home, with purple walls and a signed photo of Esther Williams on the mantelpiece. “Lourdes just didn’t understand that it wasn’t ’83 and she wasn’t on the runways,” he sighs. “She wasn’t the center of attention, and she couldn’t take it.”

McRae’s roommate is a beat cop, and after he changes from sweats into his uniform he comes over with a book in his hand, Gay Talese’s *The Overreachers*. He points to a passage: *They make the same mistakes, the same stupid, reckless, dramatic, wonderful mistakes. They take that extra step; dive too deep, climb too far, get too grabby with the gods.* “Read this,” he says. “And you’ll understand Lourdes.”

LATE ON NOVEMBER 14, EXACTLY A month after Gruart’s disappearance, Mario is hanging out in her apartment, padding around in white socks, running shorts, and the same orange fleece jacket he was wearing a week before. Though his *Star Wars* figures are still vigilant on the window ledge, he’s moved all the rest of his tchotchkes to the kitchen counter and fanned out Gruart’s collection of Bloomingdale’s catalogues and old *Allure* magazines on the coffee table, the way it was before she left. “I’m trying to get things ready for when my sister comes back,” he says. “It’s probably soon. She said several weeks.”

Several weeks sounds quite different from the couple he had initially told the police. “Oh, I don’t know about words,” says Mario. “Words don’t mean anything to me.” He gets upset when asked more questions, and refuses to let a photographer take any pictures of the apartment, himself, or Gruart’s modeling book, which he promised he would allow earlier that day. “The police were here last night, poking around,” he complains, a flicker of anger crossing his face. “My sister said she was going to Europe on a job opportunity. That’s all I know. Now could the lot of you roll out of here?”

Still smiling: A recent shot of Gruart.

The idea that Gruart could have actually done as Mario says, however, is little solace to their mother. “We talked each week,” she moans. “She never went anywhere without telling me. I was visiting her for Thanksgiving—what, she forgot it? No.” Nor is it much comfort to her friends. “Job opportunity?” cries McRae. “What job opportunity was there for a 46-year-old model in Europe?” No one can believe that Gruart would have gone anywhere without picking up her last check from Winston: “That girl would fly back from Paris to get a penny if she was owed it,” claims a friend.

Other friends, former models, point to her delusions about men and her depression. They talk about how a working model called her in early October to offer her some clothes she’d been given by a designer, but Gruart, who would normally “pounce” on such things, never returned the call. She acted odd a few months ago at an informal modeling gig at Bergdorf’s, “lethargic, not herself, like she was on something.” They say she seemed so blue that she could have simply up and left town, deciding either to start over or end it all.

Another theory that has been floated is that Gruart’s desperation had led her to another line of

Continued on page 151

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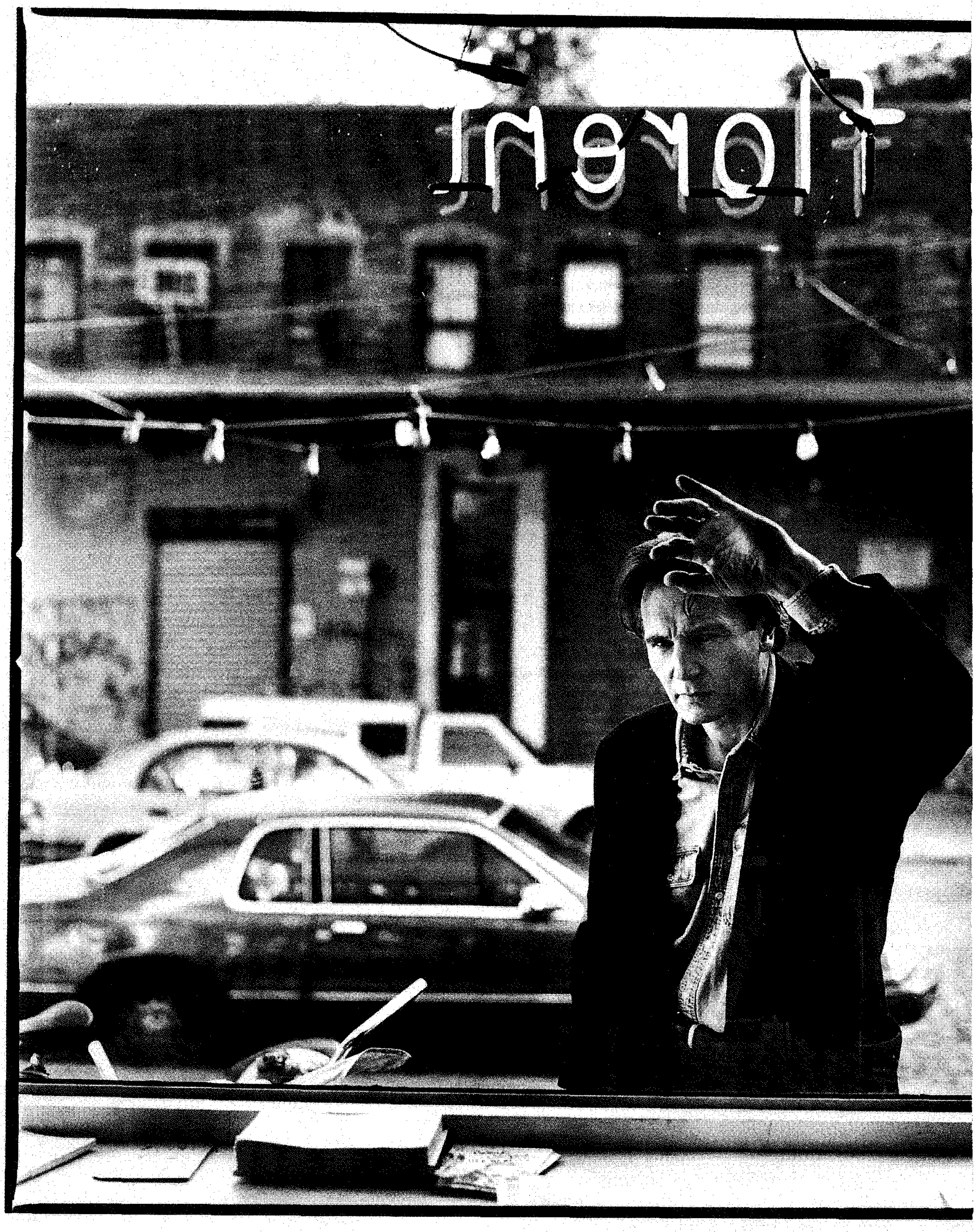
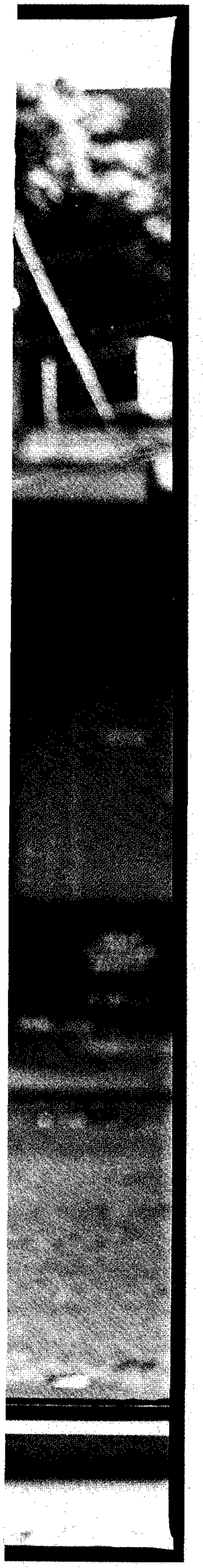


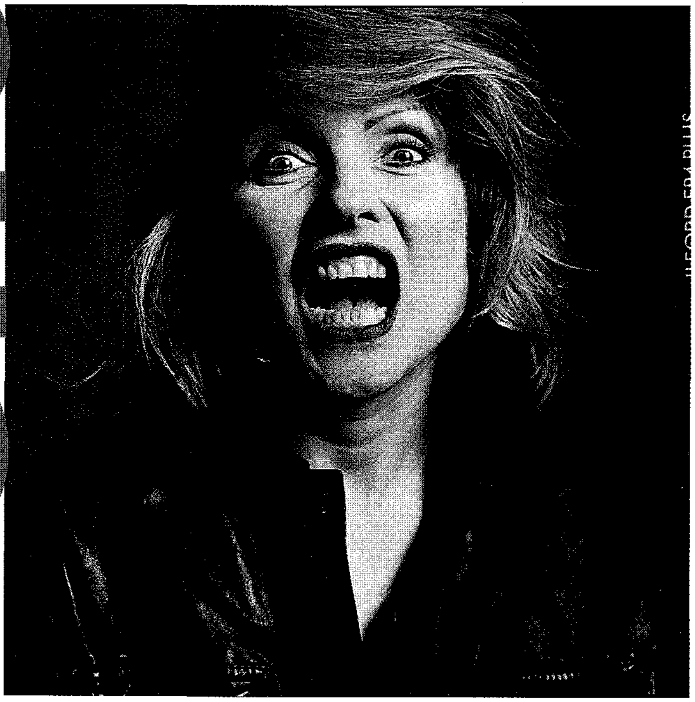
BEHIND THE SCENES Parry shot this moody picture of Liam Neeson leaning on the window outside Florent in the meatpacking district because when he first met him, he thought Neeson seemed "very introspective and looking in on himself." He admits, though, that sometimes his job is more about technique than poetry: "Sometimes you shoot it a certain way because you just know it's going to make a good picture."

SHARP SHOOTER

PORTRAITS OF THE ARTISTS BY NIGEL PARRY



PHOTOGRAPHER NIGEL PARRY dismisses his first big break as the result of a misunderstanding between two professional acquaintances. "They each assumed that the other thought I was brilliant," he explains, "and so they gave me an exhibition. Pure fluke." Well, perhaps—though the two, no doubt, have been convinced of his talent by now. Parry paid his dues at a graphic-design job in London. "One day I woke up and realized, 'This isn't for me. I'm going to do photography,' " he says. Soon, he'd scrounged up enough freelance work to quit his job. Then, in 1994, he made his own luck by moving to New York City. "New York was *the* place for photography. This is the center of the photography world." Now, six years later, he's one of the most in-demand editorial photographers around. His new book, *Sharp,* is a collection of the best ▶

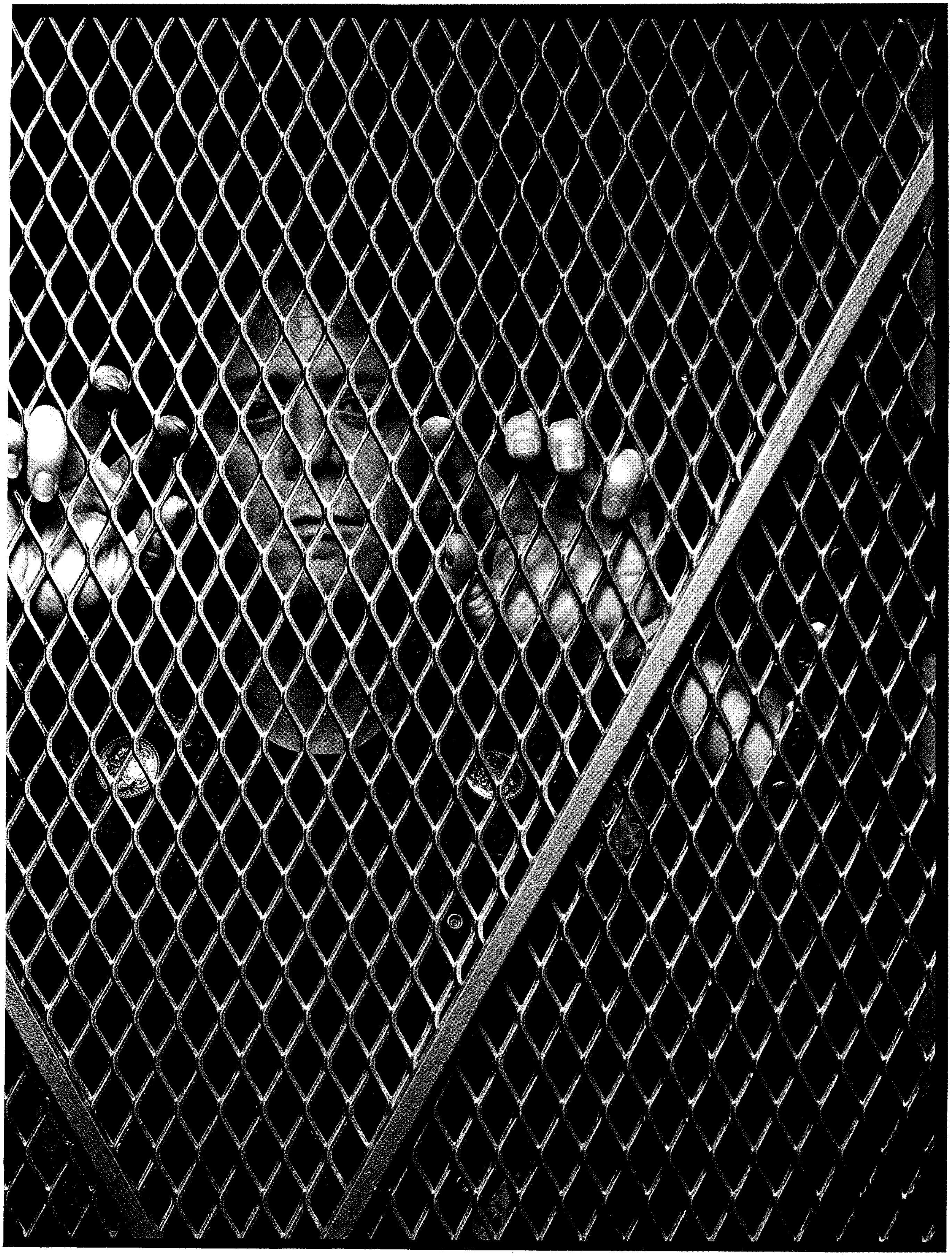


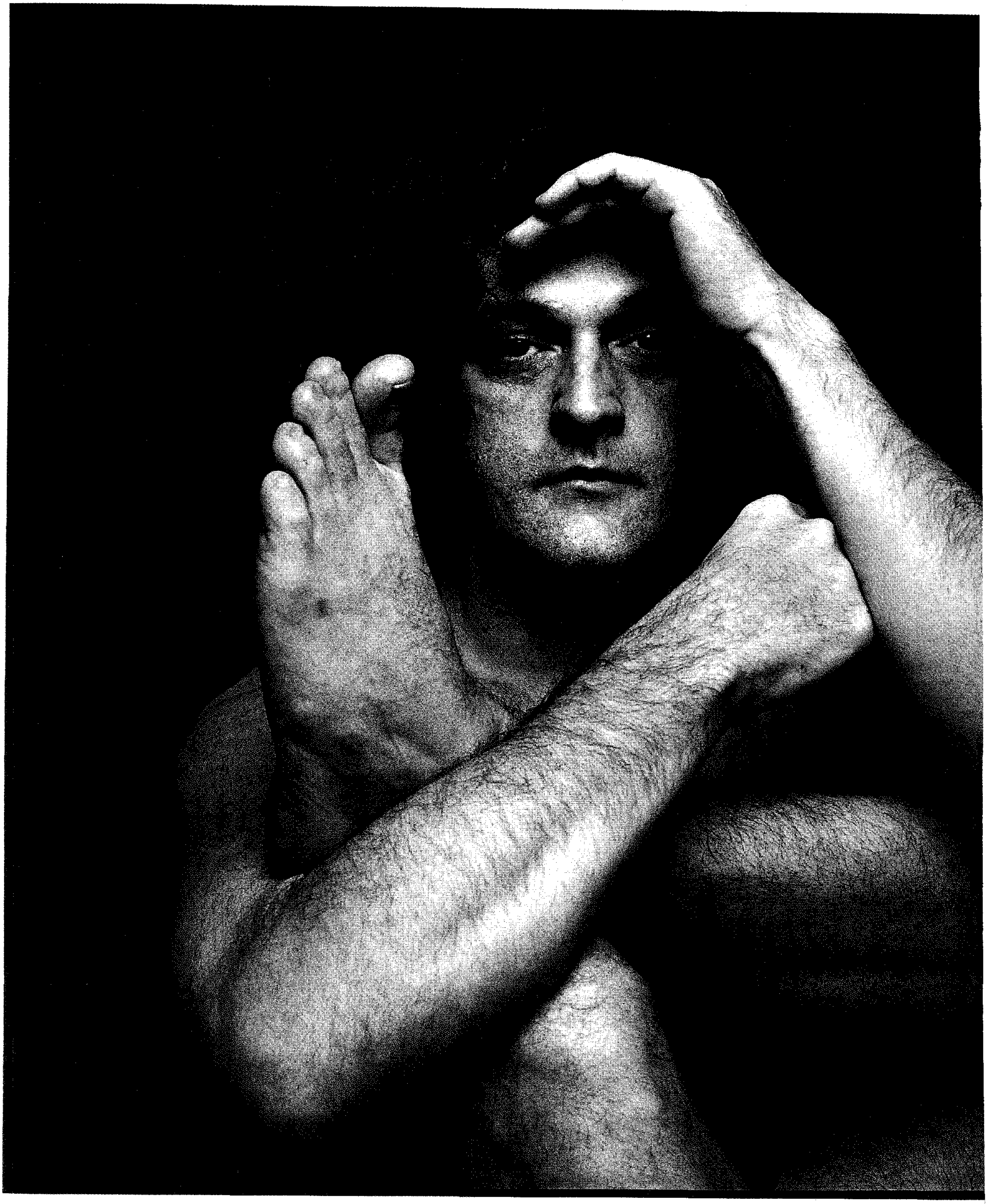
PARRY HARRY Deborah Harry showing some teeth. Parry likes this photo because "it shows how she likes to shock."

of his photographs of celebrities—from Allen Ginsberg to Samuel L. Jackson to President Clinton. At its best, portrait photography is a kind of conversation between cameraman and subject, culminating in a snapshot of the instant when, as Parry puts it, "you see an expression or you feel something from that person and you capture it. That's the decisive moment." It's a bait-and-catch game at which Parry excels. So is there anybody he *wouldn't* like to shoot? "Absolutely," he answers, "opera singers. They're *completely* horrid."

DOWN AND OUT Below, the Reverend Al Sharpton doing what he should do best. "He is a reverend, isn't he?" asks Parry. "And praying's the last thing you'd think of him doing! So that makes it interesting." Right, Lou Reed on the other side of the fence, looking in. As Parry describes, "I thought, Here's a great rocker. I want to photograph you in all your glory, real hard lighting and all that stuff. So I did."

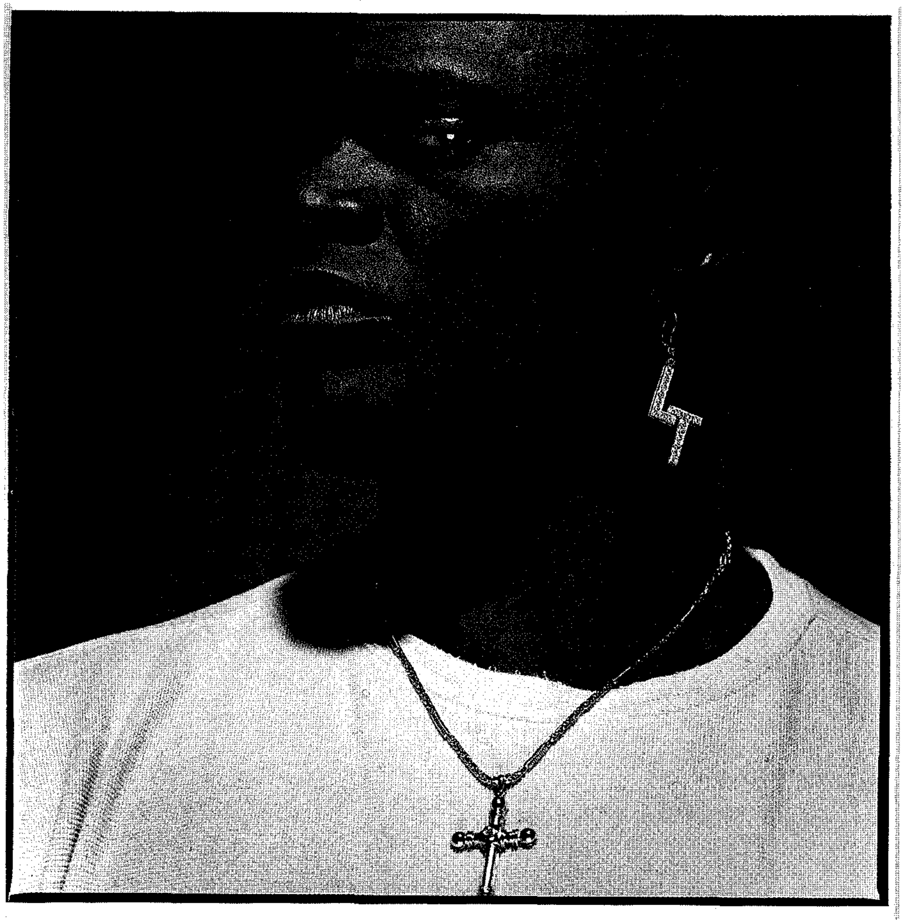
"PRAYING'S THE LAST THING YOU'D THINK OF HIM DOING."



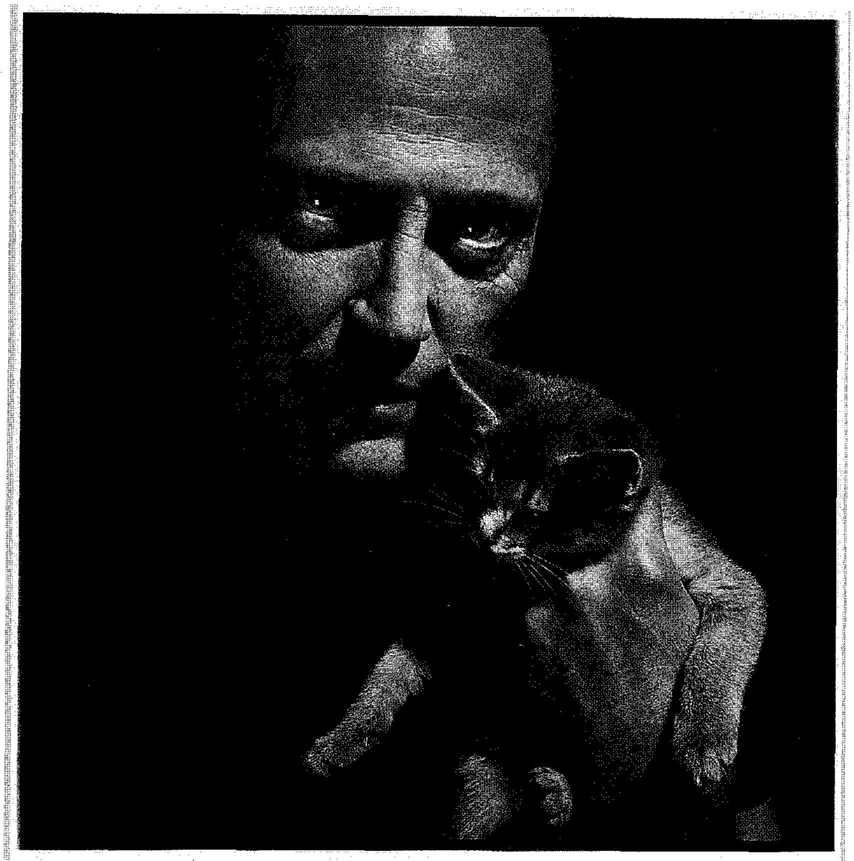


TWISTED MISTER "Mark Morris doesn't necessarily have what you'd consider a dancer's shape, and I wanted to make sure to show that side of him," says Parry of this picture. "He's sort of a short, stocky man, but he's very limber! I also wanted to make you have to look twice to know exactly what's going on here, in between all the legs and arms. And I think you do have to."

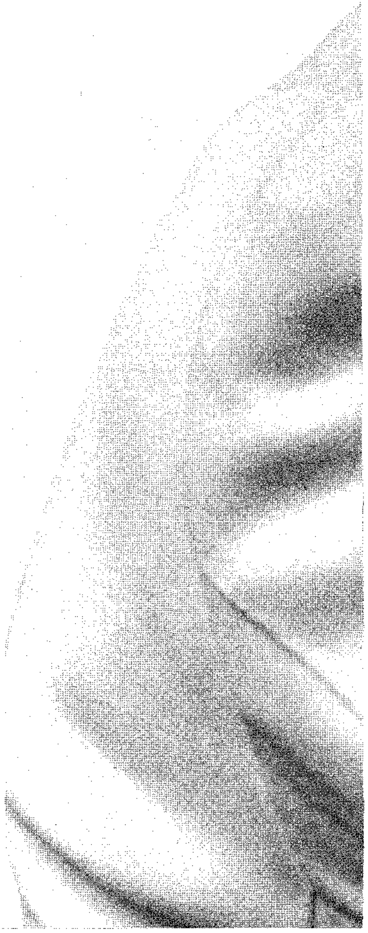
"I WANTED YOU TO HAVE TO LOOK TWICE."



LIVING IN PICTURES Top, Hall of Fame linebacker Lawrence Taylor was "almost impossible to shoot because he was, well, a little agitated" when Parry arrived to shoot his picture; bottom, Parry had to follow Liza Minnelli around Portugal for five full days before finally getting the chance to shoot her in New York. "This one reminds me of those glamorous, fifties-style photographs," he remarks. "I wanted to capture that side of her personality. Her *Cabaret* personality."



CAMERA SHY "What are you doing here? I don't sit for photographs. You'll have to photograph me while I'm being interviewed," challenged Christopher Walken when Parry showed up for this Manhattan shoot. Parry did exactly as he was told—shooting throughout the interview until he finally got one where Walken wasn't mid-sentence. Right: "He's quite a cheeky sort of chap!" says Parry of Tom Wolfe, shot here in his signature white suit and hat. "You're not sure if he's doffing his hat like a gentleman would or if he's hiding behind it. I like the ambiguity of this picture."

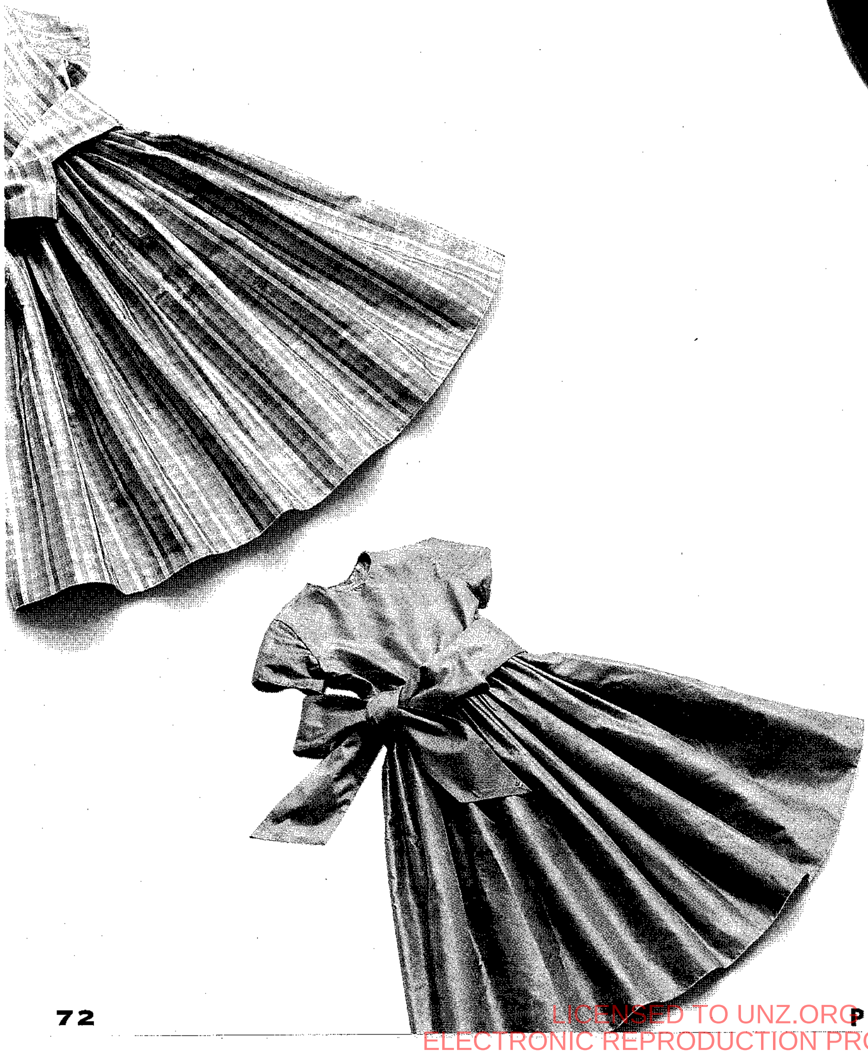


Best Bets

CANDACE WALSH

Flip Side Serafina, a great source for chic, re-wearable bridesmaid garb, has a new line of reversible dresses created for flower girls and flowery girls alike. Weekend wedding in Massachusetts? You're covered: One side works for the rehearsal dinner, the other for the reception. Chocolate ice cream gone south? A trip to the ladies' room and she's a perfect princess once more. Bonus: The double-sided skirt is poufy without any scratchy crinoline netting. And at $295, it can be a mother-daughter thing—you choose one side, she picks the other.

▶ **SERAFINA**
29 East 19th Street, third floor (by appointment only)/212-253-2754



On the Ball Anthony Gallo was one of those kids who took apart all the stereos in the house. As an adult, he and partner Gary Pelled launched their spherical-speaker business on a coffee table in Brooklyn, aiming to provide the most discriminating sound geeks with the most amazing speakers. Seven years later, they created the Nucleus Micro system, an ultramodern, designy line of four-inch speakers that provide audiophile-level sound. The system, including an equally round ten-inch subwoofer, starts at $699.

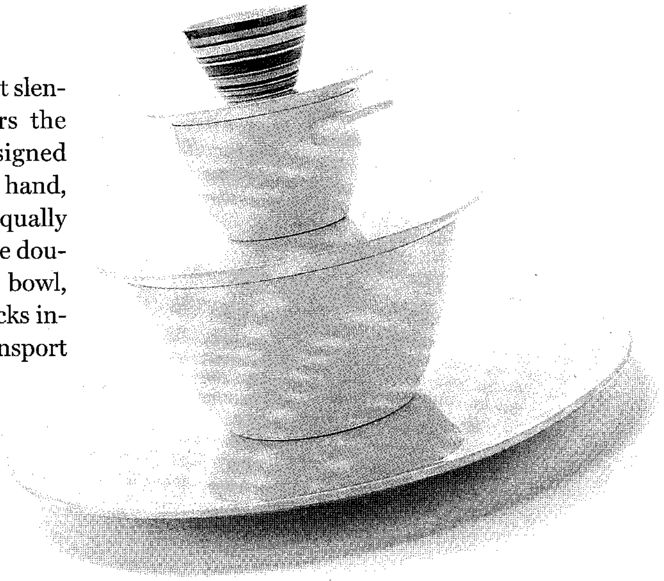
▶ **PARK AVENUE AUDIO**
425 Park Avenue South, at 29th Street/212-685-8101
▶ **STEREO EXCHANGE**
627 Broadway, near Bleecker Street/212-505-1111

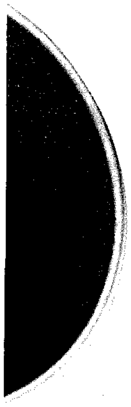
PHOTOGRAPHED BY NEDJELJKO MATURA

Setting the Scene

This sturdy yet slender-boned Rörstrand Origo tableware layers the practical with the sublime. The Swedish-designed porcelain pieces are cool, light, and elegant in hand, and the saucily striped egg cup lends itself equally well to sake-sipping. The saucer and bread plate double as slosh-protective lids for the teacup and bowl, and each plate has a subtle central nub that locks into the bases of cup and bowl for slide-free transport ($90 with egg cup; additional egg cups $12).

▶ **THE SHOP @ SCANDINAVIA HOUSE**
58 Park Avenue, near 38th Street/212-779-3587





Tote Support

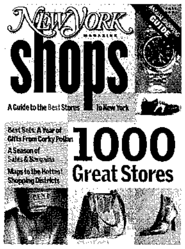
The images printed on Moschino's new double-stitched, clear-plastic totes will turn heads on the street: William Wegman's signature Weimaraner, Barbara Kruger's graphic message, Peter Halley's megadots. Moschino commissioned the images from the three artists—and three others—in conjunction with Artwalk NY 2000, the annual fund-raiser for the Coalition for the Homeless. Each artist's bag is numbered in a limited edition of 100 and will be available for $240; a portion of the proceeds will be donated to the Coalition.

▶ **MOSCHINO**
803 Madison Avenue, near 68th Street/212-639-9600
▶ **SAKS FIFTH AVENUE**
611 Fifth Avenue, near 49th Street/212-753-4000

Felt Tip

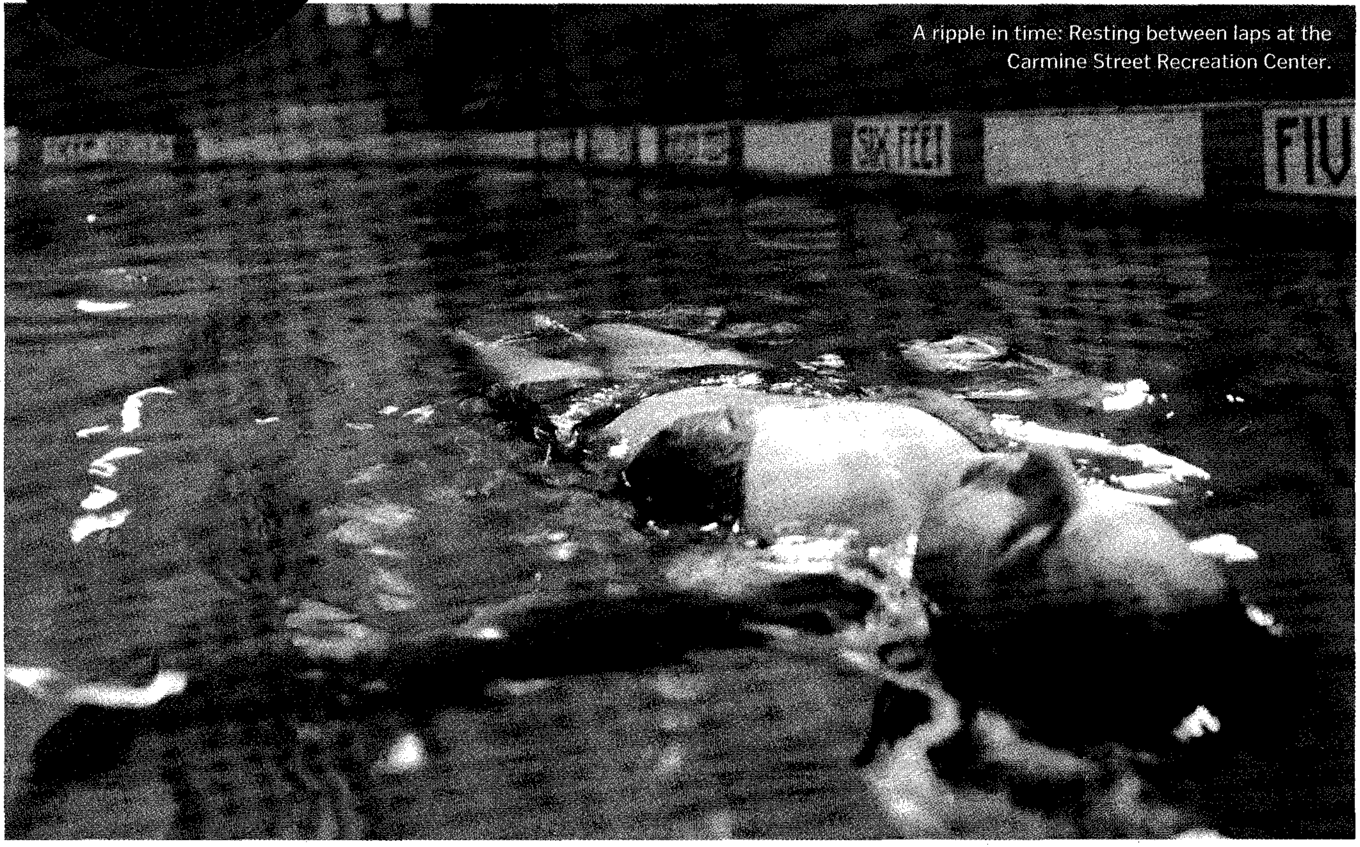
Until now, Christine Birkle has been known for the sculptural, fantastical handcrafted felt hats she sells in her Berlin boutique. Now she's ventured just as boldly onto the home front with felted-wool pieces like this colorful, whisper-soft rug. Lucky for us, John Erik of Breukelen spied one on the floor of Birkle's hat booth at a recent accessories convention and insisted on writing an order on the spot (20-by-27-inch rug is $230; 27-by-60-inch, $685).

▶ **BREUKELEN**
68 Gansevoort Street/212-645-2216 (Manhattan shop only)



Check out **New York Shops,** our comprehensive guide to the city's best stores, including a year's worth of "Best Bets." On sale at newsstands now. To order a copy, call 800-496-7833 ($4.99 plus $2 shipping and handling).

WICKHAM BOYLE



A ripple in time: Resting between laps at the Carmine Street Recreation Center.

Splash Course

Believe it or not, Manhattan is overflowing with indoor pools. Here's where to find the best of them, whether you're already a dedicated swimmer or just testing the waters.

IN THE SEVENTIES, AN ATHLETE by the euphonious name of Diana Nyad made a big splash by swimming around Manhattan island. I thought of Nyad recently while undertaking my own aquatic marathon, lap-testing the island's indoor swimming pools in hotels, gyms, rec centers, and private clubs from TriBeCa to the Upper East Side. I didn't have to contend with floating garbage or slicks of oil like Nyad did, but in my circuit around the island I did encounter pools the size of postage stamps, with funky tiles and chlorine levels verging on the toxic. I learned that while Manhattan has many indoor pools, some of them aren't much fun to swim in. But there are a few, beautiful exceptions: clean, uncrowded pools patronized by serious swimmers with proper lane manners, pools big enough to allow you to swim in one direction long enough to build up a little speed. All offer reasonably priced day passes or very inexpensive memberships, so anyone can get his or her feet wet (though I couldn't resist including one kids-only pool).

Stuyvesant High School

345 Chambers Street, 212-374-0973; six-month membership is $100.

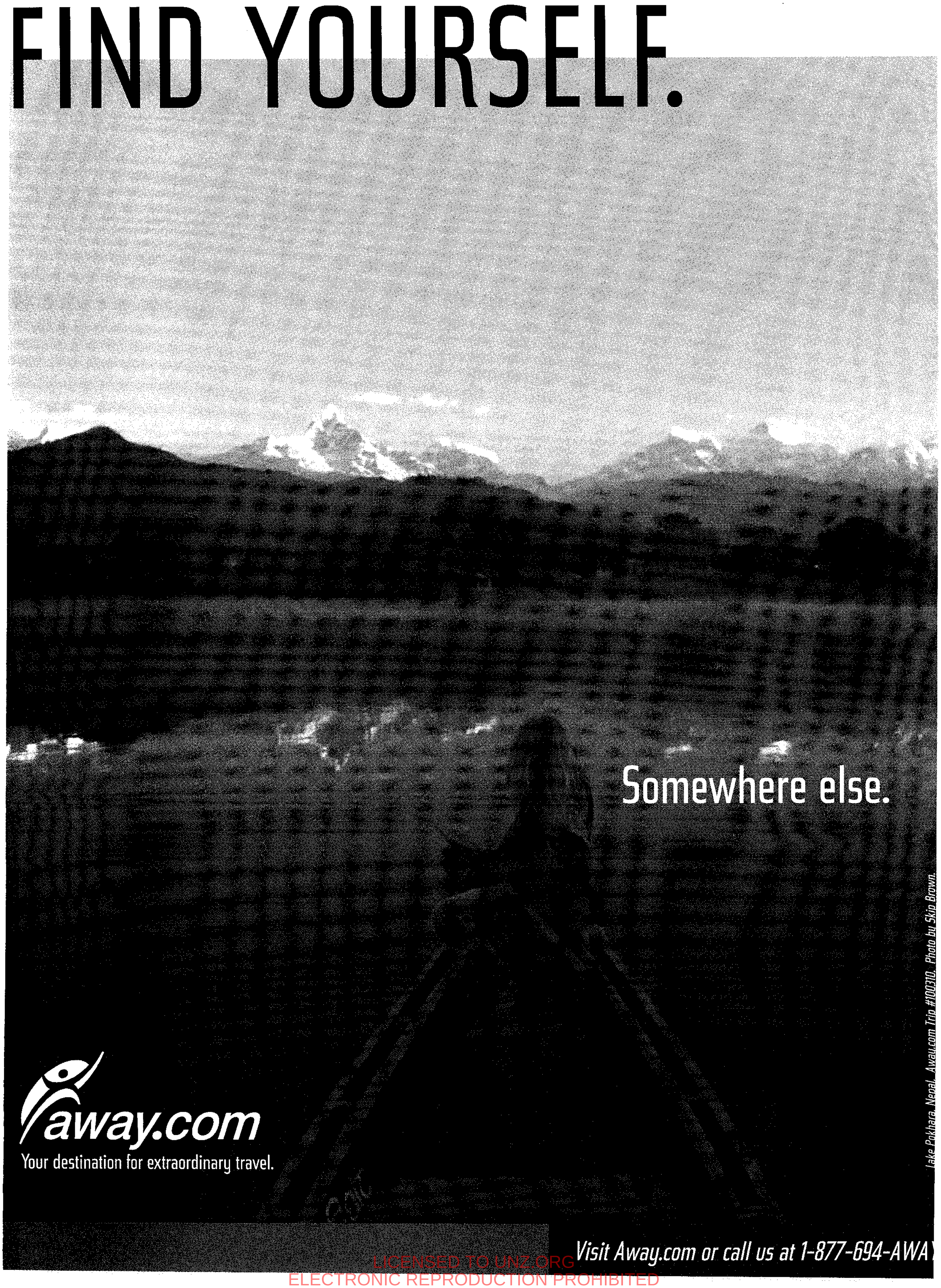
TriBeCa residents would probably prefer to keep this neighborhood secret to themselves: It's a high-school pool, and at 75 feet long a rather nice one, but it's open to the public on evenings and weekends. Go on a weeknight and you'll feel like a pasha in his private bath; on weekends the families-with-kids contingent takes over, and it can get noisy, but the views north on the Hudson ought to help you maintain your peace of mind. The two lanes are a cool 80 degrees (warm water saps a lap swimmer's strength); clamp on your goggles tightly, as the chlorine level is a tad high.

Carmine Recreation Center

1 Clarkson Street, 212-242-5418; annual membership is $25 for adults, $10 for youths and seniors.

This Parks and Recreation gem has seen plenty of traffic over the years, but the three-lane, 69-foot-long pool is still clean and well maintained, if a little over-chlorinated. Lane swimming is for

Photographs by Robert Huber.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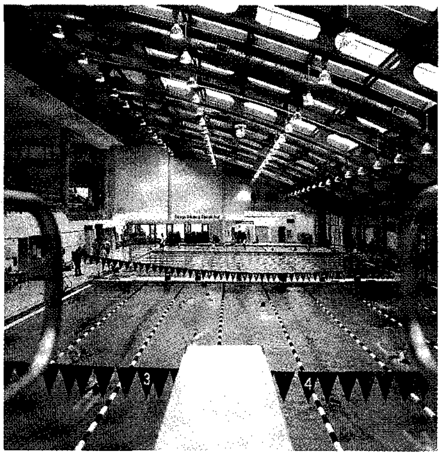
adults only; children swim separately. The precise schedule varies from month to month, but there are always available times in the morning and evening. The facilities are bit rudimentary (bring your own soap and shampoo), but at $25 a year, you can't afford not to join.

The Sports Center at Chelsea Piers

Pier 60, at West 23rd Street, 212-336-6000; day pass is $40 Monday through Friday, $50 on weekends.

Doing laps alongside the Hudson, you can easily forget where you are. Instead of glimpses of monochrome tiling, you get seagulls, yachts, and cottony clouds filtering into your peripheral vision. The pool is a crystal 75 feet by 135 feet, six lanes, and 83 degrees. The price is a little steep, but the attention to detail compensates: The tiling is immaculate, the locker rooms are stocked with body wash and shampoo from Origins, and the towels are at least as thick as any you've got at home. One caveat: Be prepared to catwalk in your swimsuit past the noisy café and lobby en route from locker room to pool.



Pool players Above, Olympic greatness at Asphalt Green; young swimmers make a splash at St. Bart's.

Manhattan Plaza Health Club

482 West 43rd Street, 212-563-7001; day pass is $25.

The retractable cover on this rooftop pool is translucent, so swimmers get drenched with sunlight as well as water. It's 82 degrees, has four lanes, and measures 75 feet by 30 feet. There's lap swimming all day during the week, and kids have their own special alcove area separated from lane traffic. The best times are late morning and early afternoon. Built as subsidized housing for artists, Manhattan Plaza is mostly populated by up-and-coming actors, so keep your eye out for the next Billy Crudup.

The Vanderbilt Y

224 East 47th Street, 212-756-9600; day pass is $25.

Night owls and insomniacs take note: The Vanderbilt Y's 75-by-40-by-4-foot pool is now open for lap swimming 24 hours a day, Monday through Friday. The twelve-year-old pool is clean and well run, and, during the day at least, humming with activity; it has six lanes and is kept at a cool, lap-friendly 80 degrees. The original 1931 pool is a more temperate 86 to 88 degrees and is used primarily for classes.

St. Bartholomew's Church Community House

109 East 50th Street, 212-378-0203; weekly parent-toddler swim is $270 for six weeks.

St. Bart's venerable 60-by-25-foot pool, built in 1928 and part of a health club for many years, is now used exclusively by the church's preschool and children's choir. But in the summer it hosts parent-toddler swims and a two-month swim camp for children aged 3 to 9. And sometime next year the church will begin renting out its pool for children's birthday parties; a lifeguard and in-pool chaperones will be provided.

The Parker Meridian Hotel

119 West 56th Street, 212-708-7340; day pass is $50.

Forty-two floors above midtown, floating beneath a huge skylight, is one of Manhattan's more luxurious swimming holes. The three-lane pool may be only 40 feet by 20 feet, but the water is a balmy 85 degrees, the towels are unlimited, and the chlorine level is minimal (and therefore much gentler on your skin and hair). Afterward, settle into one of the poolside chaise lounges where waiters from Norma's, the hotel restaurant, serve post-swim refreshments (and the odd martini) to towel-swaddled guests. On-the-spot swim lessons are also available.

Excelsior Athletic Club

301 East 57th Street, 212-688-5280; day pass is $25.

The palm and ficus trees planted around the perimeter of this sunlit, four-lane, 46-by-20-foot pool are a civilizing touch. Used mostly by office workers and athletic Wasps from Sutton Place, the 25-year-old pool is in excellent condition; its temperature is kept between 82 and 84 degrees. In good weather, the roof bubble is retracted and the deck fills up with those who still tan.

All Star Fitness Center

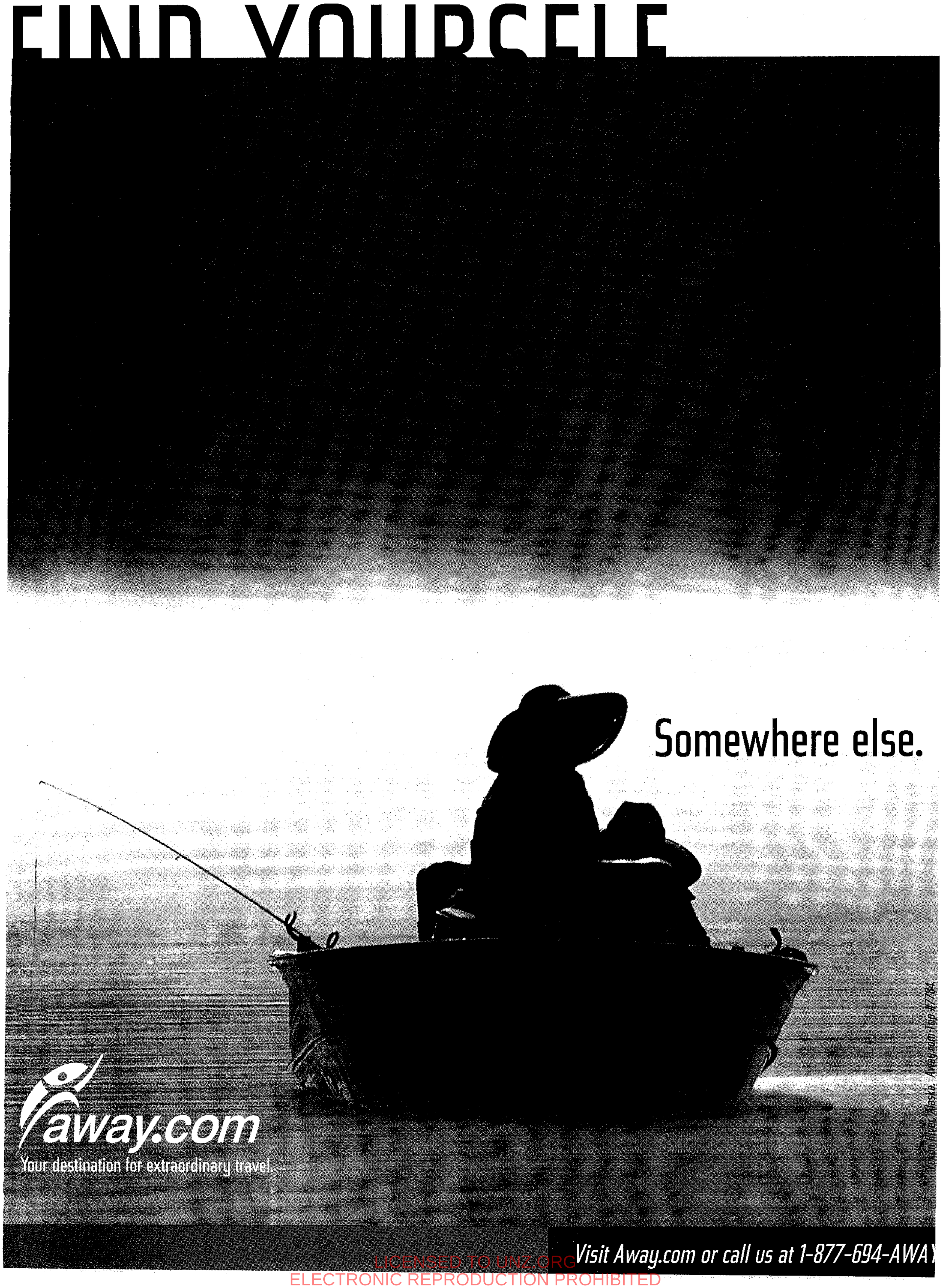
75 West End Avenue, at 63rd Street, 212-265-8200; day pass is $25.

A hidden treasure for neighborhood folks and employees from ABC studios, this five-year-old pool doesn't get used half as much as it should. It's invisible from the street, and you have to snake your way through the apartment building to get to it. The four-lane, 75-by-25-foot pool is 82 degrees, immaculate, and rarely ever crowded.

Asphalt Green

90th to 92nd Street, at York Avenue; 212-369-8890; day pass for pool only is $20, $25 with fitness center.

At first sight, this pool, the only privately run Olympic-size pool in Manhattan, is bound to make any swimmer's heart beat a little faster. Even during peak times, you won't wait long for one of the eight lanes. Pick the correct lane for your level and *do not* give yourself an upgrade; lifeguards are known to downgrade laggards to slower lanes. The water is 79 degrees and moderately chlorinated. Heated towels, a steam sauna, and wonderful, almond-scented soap round out the experience. ■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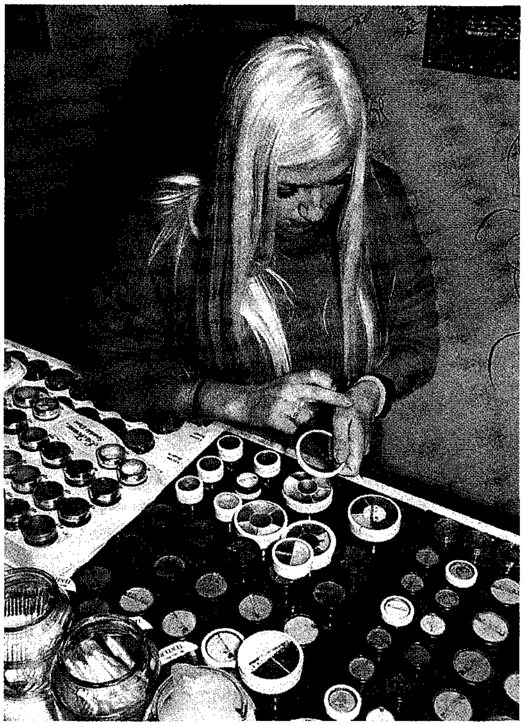
Murphy's Law

Cheer up: Makeup artist Tracy Murphy says a few cheap glosses and glitters are all you need to shine this holiday season—you could even say to glow.

'PORN LIP!" TRACY MURPHY squeals, pouncing on a pot of $6 fuchsia lip gloss at **Alcone**. "Put Wet 'n' Wild over this and it's really sexy—great for a night out." In other words, exactly what you want for an easy, glamorous party look. Murphy does makeup for runway shows for designers like Bruce and Kitty Boots and ultra-hip fashion magazines like *Dazed & Confused* and *Nylon*. Now, she's headed out shopping with us to show us what we want for the holiday cocktail circuit.

Alcone, a pro makeup shop, is affordable, quiet (no Bloomingdale's rush here!), and packed with testers to play with. Murphy brings us here for glittery products for every area of the face (basics—Pond's wipes, Complex 15 moisturizer—come from **Ricky's**).

"Start with your eyes," she says, checking out a selection of shimmery powders. She tests a greenish gold one on her hand—La Femme Sparkle Dust ($6)—"the same thing costs $20 at department stores." She'll pick up a couple of other colors—the gold blends well with iridescent turquoise or peach—and a few of La Femme's lip glosses ($6): A pale pink is "very Jennifer Lopez," a coral is "great if you're tan," and the raspberry is, well, a must for porn lip. Big lashes are also key. Murphy subjects her own to layers of three different mascaras ("an obsession—I'm mental about it," she admits); you might want to try Fast Lash—fuzzy, polyester fibers that brush on under mascara ($14). Set makeup with Ben Nye Neutral Set ($6), a translucent powder that vanishes on application. "I bring it to the shows 'cause it works on every skin color," says Murphy. Use a fluffy brush for a sheer finish ("I hate a drag-queen-matte face"). Murphy suggests paint brushes from **Pearl Paint**—they're cheaper than makeup brushes; break off the handles, and they're basically the same. Pick stiff, flat synthetic ones for concealer, pointier ones for eyeliner, and fluffy sable ones for powder (even these are affordable here). After your face is sparkled to perfection, paint a thin coat of gold polish over your red nails.



Powder room: Tracy Murphy freshens us up at Alcone.

To carry your new things without buying a new makeup bag, fill a tiny palette ($4) with a smidgen of each. Or buy lots of palettes and play Santa: "One Christmas," Murphy confides, "I filled them up with makeup and gave them to all my relatives." The cost? Sixty dollars for all the Alcone products—and a taxi to Pearl Paint.

Alcone, 235 W. 19th St. (212-633-0551). Pearl Paint, 308 Canal St. (212-431-7932) and 207 E. 23rd St. (212-592-2179).

Picks of the Week

Donna Karan Intimates and DKNY Underwear are clearing leftover stock at 60 to 80 percent off (and samples are as little as $4). *136 Madison Ave., at 31st St., ninth floor (212-545-9020); checks accepted; Tues. 10–6, Wed.-Thurs. 9–6; 11/28–11/30.*

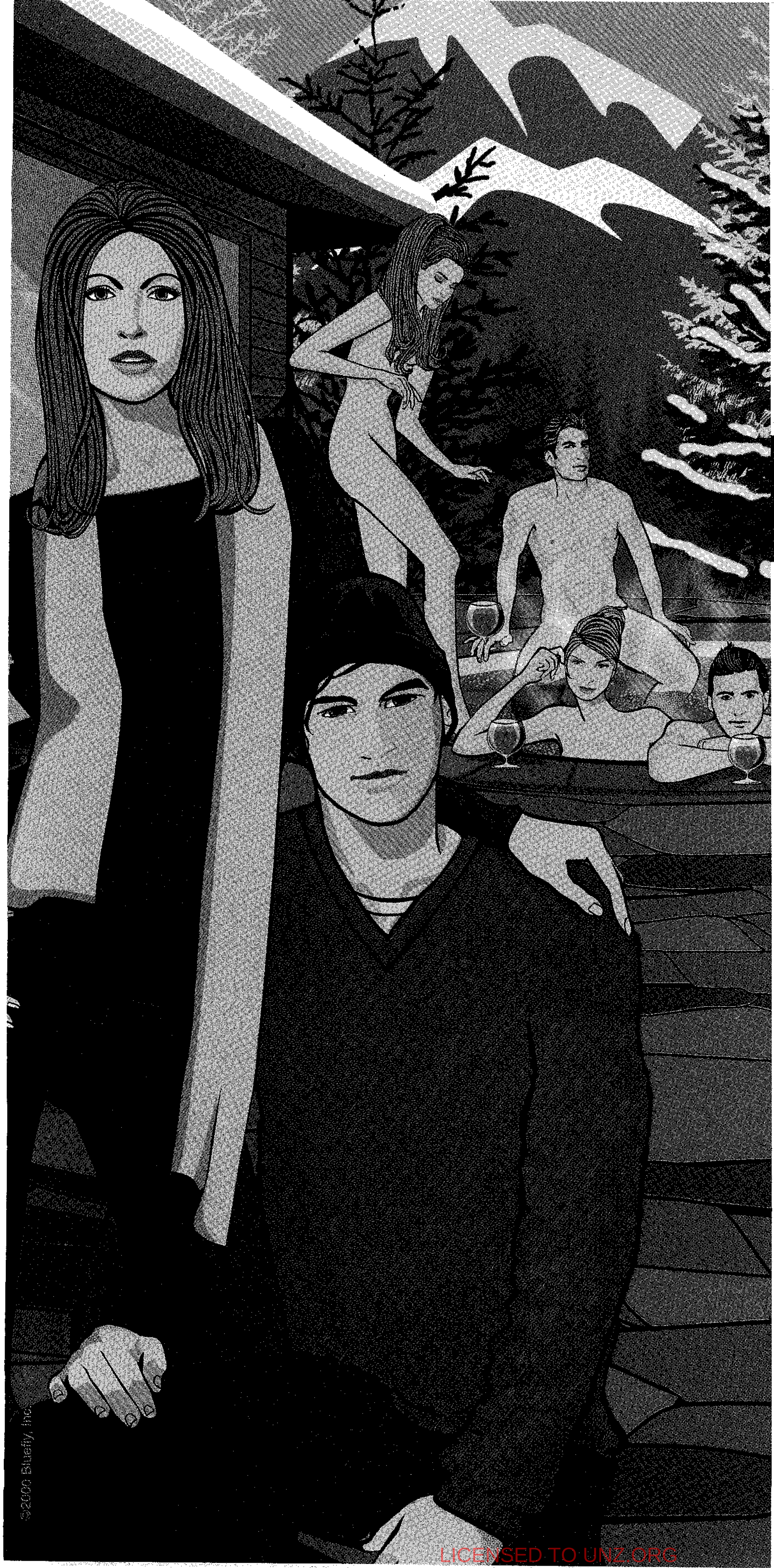
Nicole Farhi's taking up to 70 percent off sharp, chic fall classics for men and women, including shearling coats ($400–$425), suede pants ($250), and sweaters ($75–$200). *14 E. 60th St., second floor (212-421-7720); A.E., M.C., V.; Wed.-Thurs 10–7; 11/29–11/30.*

Malia Mills's bikinis, maillots, and sarongs from last summer are 50 to 75 percent off. Tops and bottoms are $20–$40, one-pieces are $30–$50. *255 W. 36th St., eighth floor (212-563-4006); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.-Fri. 10–7; 11/27–12/1.*

Metropolitan Design Group's fashion- and home-accessory sale of thirteen hip, young designers' samples has lingerie, candles, pillows, handbags, and hair doodads—all very good gifts. *80 W. 40th St., eighth floor (212-944-6110); cash only; Tues.-Thurs. 8–7; 11/28–11/30.*

Meg Cohen's striped cashmere scarves, stoles, and blankets (at stores like Bergdorf's and Paul Smith) are fab gifts—especially when prices are 60 percent off ($85–$275) and wrapping is free. *920 Broadway, suite 905, near 21st St. (212-473-4002); A.E., M.C., V.; Wed.-Fri. 11–7, Sat. till 4; 11/29–12/2.*

Photograph by Brooke Williams.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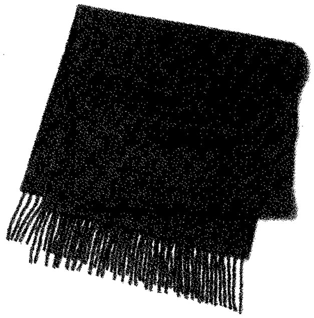
designer cashmere boatneck
suggested retail $275 | **bluefly $125**

cashmere@bluefly



designer cashmere scarf
suggested retail $125 | **bluefly $59**

designer cashmere turtleneck
suggested retail $225 | **bluefly $99**

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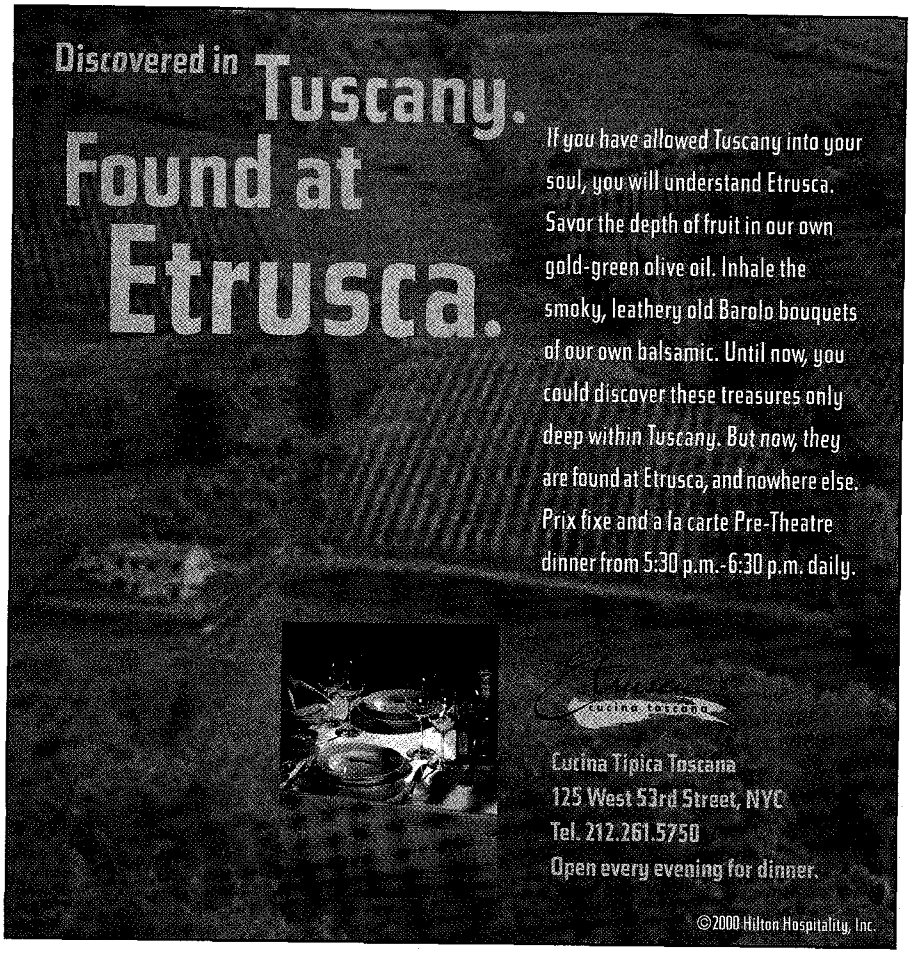
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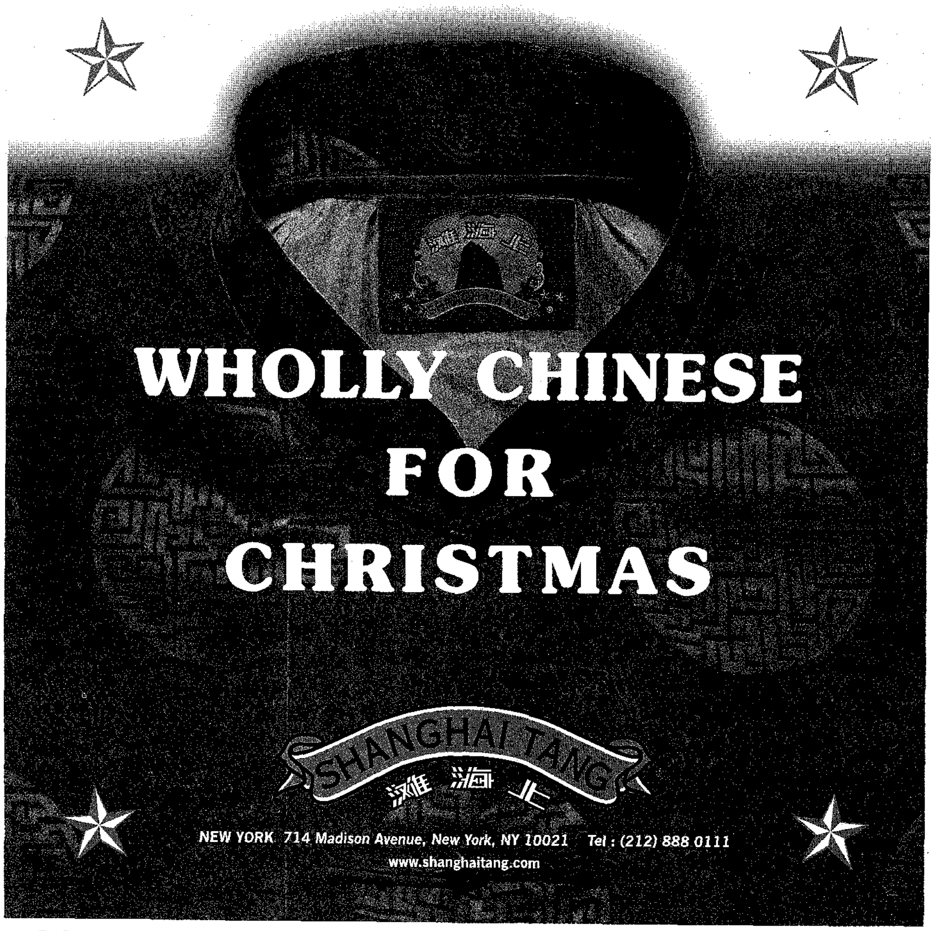
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Carla Westcott and **Heidi Weisel**'s joint sale has loads of sleek evening ensembles and gowns for 70 to 90 percent off, from $75 to $300. Sizes 4–14. *530 Seventh Ave., at 39th St., 20th floor; checks accepted; Fri. 8–6; 12/1.*

The Gown Company has offerings from many eveningwear designers, including Carolina Herrera and Vera Wang, for $400 to $1200 (up to 80 percent off). *The Lombardy Hotel, 111 E. 56th St. (212-979-9000); M.C., V.; Wed.-Thurs. 10–7; 11/29–11/30.*

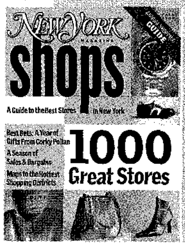
Swiss Army is clearing loads and loads of samples for at least 60 percent off, including watches ($35–$300), knives ($5–$30), sunglasses ($50), and luggage ($40–$250). *24 W. 40th St., first floor; A.E., M.C., V.; Tues.-Fri. 8–7, Thurs. till 8, Sat. 10–5; 11/28–12/2.*

Daniel Levy's taking at least half off imperfect and discontinued versions of his chic, earthy porcelain vases, plates, and platters (sold at stores like ABC Carpet & Home). Prices are from $10 to $85. *155 W. 29th St., suite 3N; cash only; Fri.-Sat. 11–7, Sun. noon–6; 12/1–12/3.*

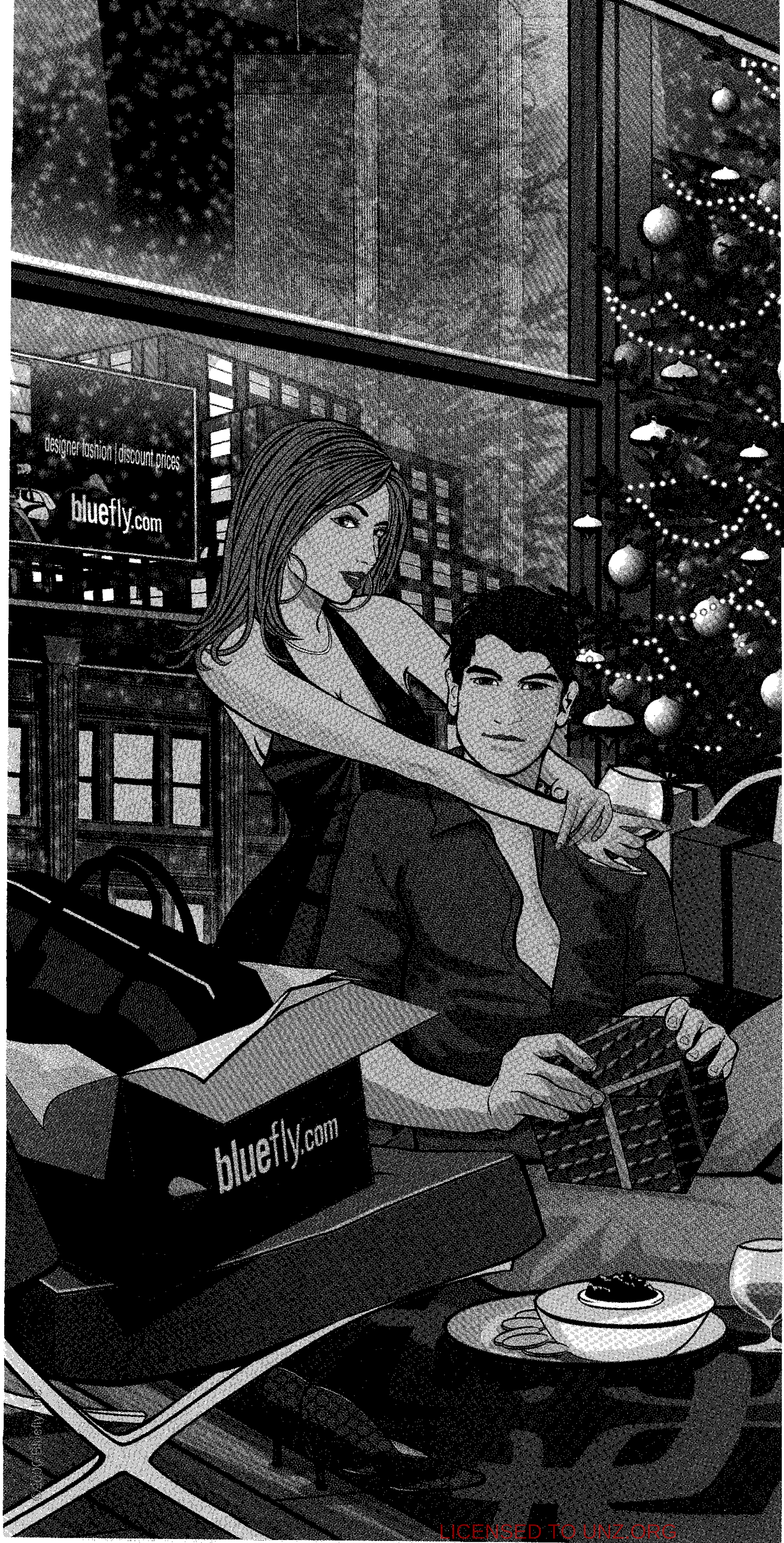
Scanlan Glass is a group of nine artists who make handblown glass. During their sale, they're selling tableware and sculpture (as seen at MoMA) for $10 to $300; they're also holding glassblowing demonstrations. *103 14th St., Brooklyn (718-369-3645); checks accepted; Sat.-Sun. 11–6; 12/2–12/3, 12/9–12/10.*

Katha Diddèl Home Collection's needlepoint pillows, crib linens, tree skirts, and more are on sale for 20 to 40 percent off (they're usually sold at stores like Saks and Bergdorf's). Prices are $80–$200. *Swissôtel 440 Park Ave., at 56th St. (212-725-6045); A.E., M.C., V.; Tues.-Thurs. 9–7; 11/28–11/30.* ■

DO NOT PHONE: Send suggestions to Sales & Bargains, New York Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, four weeks before the sale.



Check out **New York Shops**, our guide to the city's best stores, including a five-month roundup of "Sales & Bargains." On sale at newsstands now. To order a copy, call 800-496-7833 ($4.99 plus $2 shipping and handling).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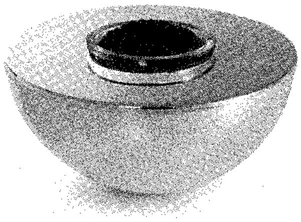

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Travel

TARA MANDY

Ask Jeeves

Next time you're in London, consider this alternative to hotel living: Go native at 51 Buckingham Gate, where a three-bedroom apartment in a modernized 1897 mansion costs $1,390 per night and includes a kitchen, living room, and butler who will party-plan, shop, or run your bath. (Just don't call him Jeeves.) And if sharing this Victorian space with other guests isn't exclusive enough (there are three converted mansions, housing 82 apartments), you can now rent your own London townhouse on a daily basis. The eight-bedroom Bloomsbury House, built in 1776, is located just north of Covent Garden and costs $2,065 per night. Guests enjoy their own library and outdoor garden as well as marble bathrooms, Penhaligon's toiletries, and Frette linens. For an additional $150 per day, they'll toss in a car and chauffeur. *For reservations at 51 Buckingham Gate, call 877-528-2503; to reserve the Bloomsbury House, call 44-207-631-4115.*

Think Stowe

We used to think it was more convenient to ski in Colorado or Utah than in neighboring Vermont, even for a long weekend. The peaceful four-hour flight west beat the grueling six-to-seven-hour drive north, and flying to Burlington often cost more than flying to Salt Lake City! But now, thanks to affordable new flights from JetBlue, a painless Vermont ski weekend is imminently feasible . . . and cheap. Take the 50-minute flight from JFK to Burlington; drive 45 minutes to Stowe in a Thrifty Car rental; spend three nights at any of 50 Stowe-area lodges (we prefer the Stoweflake Mountain Resort, the Trapp Family Lodge, or the Inn at the Mountain); and enjoy two full-day downhill passes. *The "Fly, Drive, Stay & Play" package costs $326 and is available until April 15, 2001; call 877-31-STOWE.*

Back to Africa

Holland & Holland, the oh-so-English outfit long known for its handmade shotguns and stylish safari clothes, has entered the travel business, offering game-viewing trips to Africa. A new trip planner, who customizes excursions to match each client's needs, is now in residence at the 57th Street store. Prices start at around $400 per person per night, including lodging, meals, and wildlife tours. Our favorite option is the five-day elephant-back safari in Botswana. For $7,000 per person, guests stay in luxury tents with bathrooms, hot and cold running water, electricity, and private verandas. Days are spent viewing wildlife from the backs of repatriated elephants who used to live and work in North American zoos and circuses. *To book a trip, call Samantha Ford at 212-752-7755.*

etc.

NOT A SMALL WORLD ANYMORE Next February, Disneyland unveils its largest expansion in 45 years: California Adventure is a $1.4 billion, 55-acre addition featuring a 750-room hotel and three amusement "lands"—Paradise Pier, Hollywood Pictures Backlot, and the Golden State. For information, call 714-781-4565. • **SNOW REVOIR** Holiday shoppers who turn their noses up at Madison Avenue in favor of Paris's Golden Triangle will appreciate the Hotel Lancaster's proximity to Avenue Montaigne, Avenue des Champs Élysées, and Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré. The hotel's Parisian Christmas package, valid from December 16 to 26, starts at $868 for a three-night stay with breakfast, and includes a gift-stuffed stocking on Christmas morning. For reservations, call 33 1 40 76 40 08. • **BLOWN AWAY** After extensive post-Hurricane Lenny renovations, the Four Seasons Resort Nevis has reopened with two new lagoon-style pools, an entertainment center for teens, and a high-tech business center. And, yes, they still spritz sunbathing guests with Evian. (Some things will never change.) For reservations, call 800-332-3442; doubles start at $775.

Illustration by Rob Blackard. Photographs: left, courtesy of Eton Town House Group; right, courtesy of Holland & Holland.

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cue

A Weekly Guide to Culture and Upcoming Events

Edited by Christopher Bonanos

Movies

A Hard Day's Night

Re-release, December 1

Roger Ebert calls the Beatles' 1964 first film one of the greatest of the century; a few years ago, MTV credited its director, Richard Lester, with inventing the music video. Trivia note: Watch for a young Phil Collins in the crowd sequences. (See page 121.)

Best of the Week

Restaurants

Winter's Eve at Lincoln Square

December 4, 6:30 P.M.

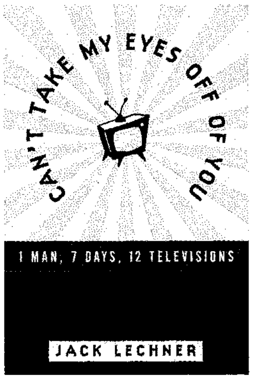
Who says the Upper West Side is restaurant Siberia? Following Lincoln Center's Christmas-tree lighting, a "Winter's Eve Passport" ($30) entitles you to tastings from Café des Artistes, Shun Lee West, Rosa Mexicano, and many more. Piano accompaniment is by Cyrus Chestnut, the jazzman with the Christmassy name, who'll be at Tower Records. Broadway to Amsterdam Avenue, 59th to 70th Streets; call Ticketmaster to reserve.

Books

Can't Take My Eyes Off of You

Crown; $23.95

Jack Lechner recreates the 1967 experiment in which one poor soul soaked up everything on TV—six sets at once—for a week. For the cable-era remake, Lechner (*Jeopardy!* champ, former Miramax executive, and $125,000-winner on *Millionaire*) doubled the number of screens. What happened to his eyeballs, intellect, and sanity is told in funny prose free of vast-wasteland condescension. (Except when he talks about *The View*.)



Nightlife

k.d. lang

At the Beacon Theatre

The lowercased ingenue with the pansexual appeal comes to town. Expect to hear songs from her new album, *Invincible Summer*, inspired by what she says she's been listening to lately: "The Mamas & the Papas, surf punk, and a lot of Brazilian music." (See page 148.)

Art

Day With(out) Art

December 1

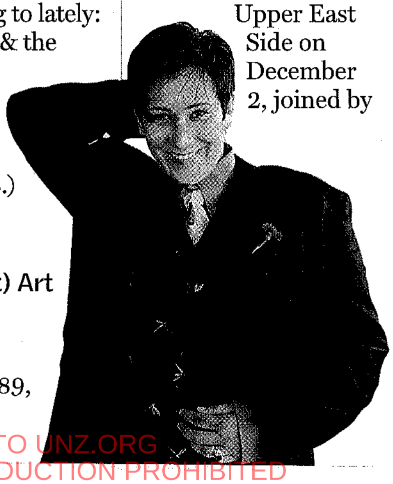
Since it was created in 1989, it's become a day *with* art, as 8,000 galleries and museums worldwide commemorate the art world's losses to AIDS. The Jewish Museum is running a special tour, highlighting objects that reflect the day's themes; Judson Memorial Church will hold a candlelight vigil. For a full calendar of events, see www.artistswithaids.org/artery.

In Concert

Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg and Anne-Marie McDermott

At the 92nd Street Y

I like a Gershwin tune . . . how about you? The siren of the violin brings her spaghetti straps and bow to the Upper East Side on December 2, joined by piano star McDermott; George will share the program with Brahms and Stravinsky. (See listing, page 145.)



Theater

Old Money

Lincoln Center Theater

Wendy Wasserstein's back at the institution that launched *The Sisters Rosensweig* and *An American Daughter*. Her new play—a Wasp attends a party at the East Side mansion where he grew up, and meets the hedge-fund manager who owns it now—is a study of New York past and present, old aristocracy lost and new money found. Except . . . haven't the hedge-fund guys lost their mojo, too? (Pictured, John Cullum and Charlie Hofheimer; see listing, page 129.)

Photographs: from left to right, courtesy of Photofest/Jagarts; Jon Ragel/Corbis Outline; Joan Marcus.

Parallel *Universe*

Lily Tomlin returns after fifteen years with her one-woman, thirteen-character show essentially unchanged; at the Public Theater, *Kit Marlowe* dies again.

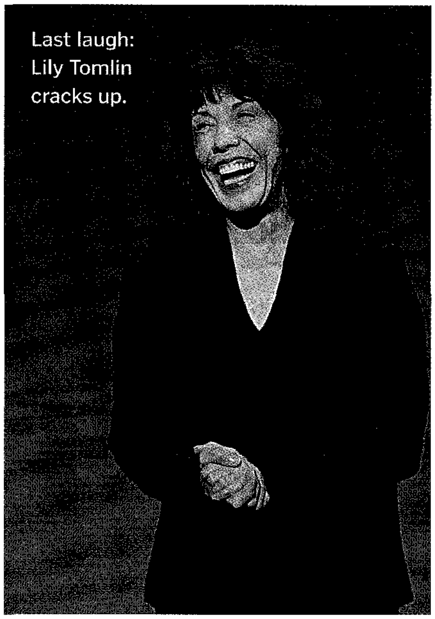
LILY TOMLIN IS AN ACCOMPLISHED comedienne who has proved her mettle as both actress and monologuist in all performance media. She can embody a plethora of characters in whirlwind succession—including some men—changing her voice, manner, agile movement, even her face. In a simple, loose-fitting black outfit, with no visible makeup and minimal scenery, a few light effects by Ken Billington, and nary a prop, she conjures up a world—not universal but a world.

The problem is Jane Wagner's text for this not very modified revival of **The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe**, her 1985 solo show for Miss Tomlin. Even spectators for whom this is not *déjà entendu* will find it a mite (the French have a word for everything) passé. There is a trap in the very format: Miss Tomlin switches into too many characters, from a philosophical bag woman communicating with extraterrestrials to a suicidally depressed society lady, for any one of them to come indelibly alive, though the second half of the program does better than the first.

The text shuttles relentlessly between the agglomeration of one-liners and multicharacter skits that happen to be enacted by a single performer. There is no true protagonist like Dame Edna, and no biting social commentator like Jackie Mason. Finally, the humor is not only obsolescent but also a trifle precious: "The only thing more depressing than writing a suicide note is losing the one you've just written," or "He was the only man who ever knew where he was when Sylvia Plath died." But if you love Lily Tomlin, a lot of her will come tumbling out at you.

HISTORIC PLAYS HAVE BECOME A BIT OF A rarity, which adds interest to David Grimm's **Kit Marlowe**. Nineteen years ago, we had an abysmal musical called *Marlowe*, whose absurd memory is rekindled by Grimm's beginning: Young Thomas Walsingham opens the play with an obscenity, and Marlowe swings in on a rope, wearing not so much as Tarzan's G-string, to gambol with his friend.

The few known facts or surmises about Christopher Marlowe (1564–93)—a shoemaker's son, Cambridge scholar, and dazzling playwright—are that he was a homosexual; a spy in the service of Thomas's uncle, Sir Francis Walsingham, sent by him to France to unearth a Catholic conspiracy to overthrow Elizabeth I in favor of Mary Stuart; and a dead man from a stab wound in the eye administered by one Ingram Frizer in a tavern brawl over payment of the bill.



Last laugh: Lily Tomlin cracks up.

Grimm, once past the initial shock effect, spins an intermittently credible tale of the violent life and death of the young genius and hothead, who loosened blank verse into the flexible instrument perfected by his contemporary, Will Shakespeare. The play does not much concern itself with Marlowe the poet and dramatist, but it does invent some spectacular adventures, hairbreadth escapes, and harebrained provocations. It does show Kit Marlowe as a rapt admirer of Sir Walter Raleigh; as scorner of his rival, Essex; and as recalcitrant tool of the spymaster Walsingham, as well as comrade and lover of the latter's nephew, Thomas. It also creates a homoerotic atmosphere: No woman appears, there is much amorous all-male rolling on the floor, Marlowe even dons drag to impersonate Elizabeth, and there are ample puns on such matters as "getting at the bottom of things."

The language, despite periodic slipups, is a jolly amalgam of the Elizabethan and the modern, and there is a fairly believable portrayal of Marlowe's fanatical and amoral superman-worship, centering on Raleigh until Sir Walter disappointed his adulator. There is a less convincing evocation of Marlowe's involvement in the School of Night, Raleigh's circle of atheist friends who amused themselves spelling "God" backward, and of the Mephistophelian Sir Francis playing devil to Kit's Faustus. Grimm's play is more fustian than Faustian, but it does yield some fun amid all the torture, bloodshed, and rodomontade.

A big problem is the casting. Sam Trammell is very fine as the confused Thomas; Martin Rayner, Bostin Christopher, and David Patrick Kelly are spot-on as various rogues; and Robert Sella offers an amusingly outrageous Essex. But then! The usually good Jon DeVries is insufferable as Sir Francis, an admittedly overextended and one-dimensional part, which the actor strips of even that dimension, unable to sound either British or the least bit varied. No better is the grossly miscast Keith David, fine in the right part

The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe
Written and Directed by Jane Wagner at the Golden Theater.

•

Kit Marlowe
Written by David Grimm; Directed by Brian Kulick at the Public Theater. See Theater listings for details.

Photograph by Carol Rosegg.

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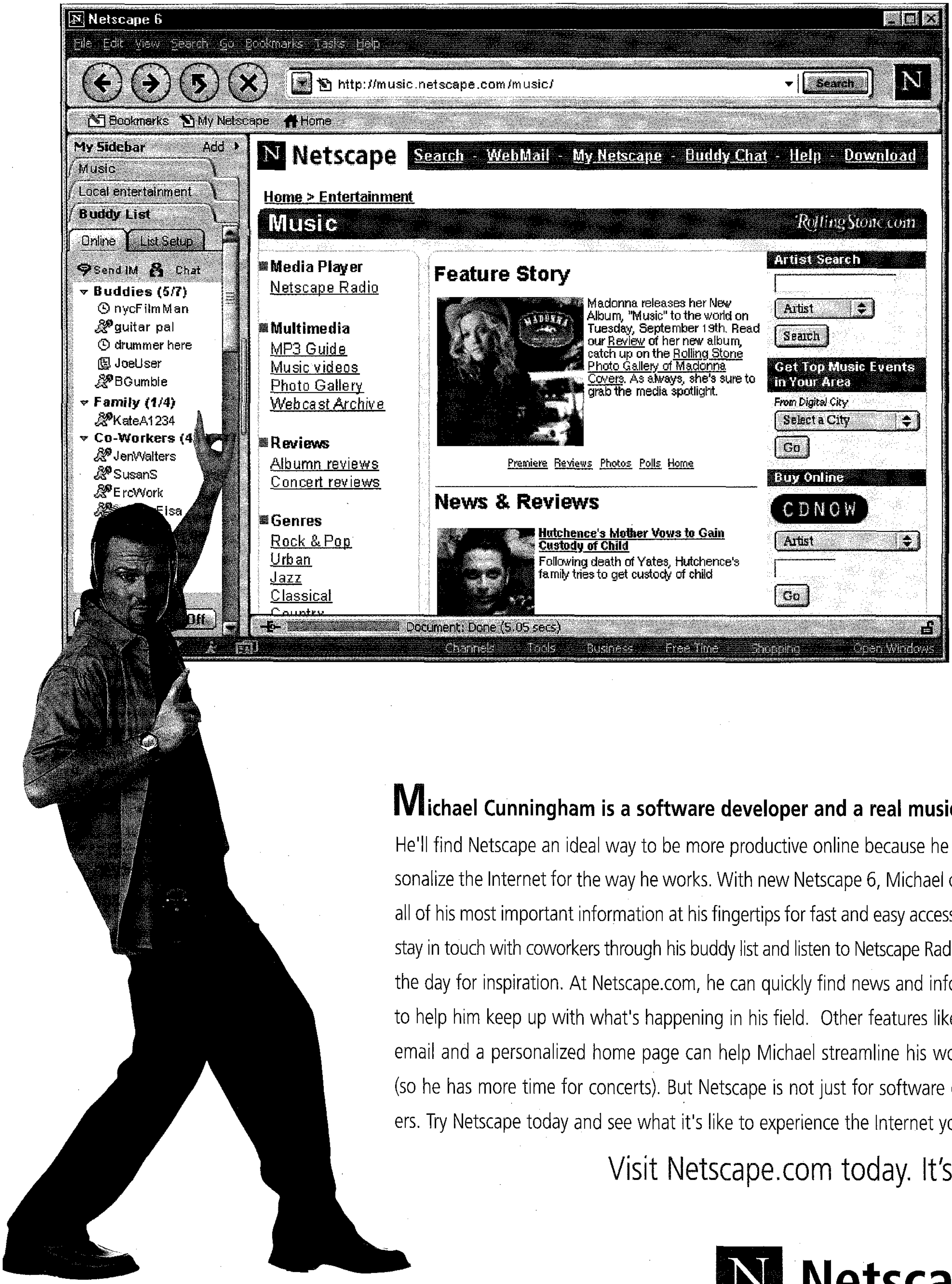
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Feature Story

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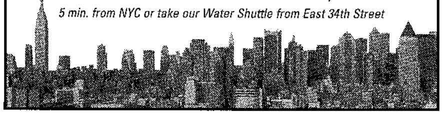

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but without the equipment for the elegant courtier Raleigh, whom he turns into a lesser Martin Luther King, Jr. And Ned Stresen-Reuter, as the Young Actor, has no talent whatever beyond looking good in the nude.

Others are mediocre, not least Christian Camargo, who has some glimmers of Marlowe but is too flimsy to embody the heaven-storming hero and carry the bulk of the play on his frail shoulders. Brian Kulick's direction ranges from the clever to the excessive, but Narelle Sissons' sets, Anita Yavich's costumes, and the rest of the production values are apt, even if Marlowe's famous "mighty line" is not matched by Grimm's wobbly one.

ONCE LONG AGO, WHEN BRENDAN BEHAN was dining and drinking by himself at the Algonquin, a waiter who recognized me and my group approached to inquire whether the lonely Mr. Behan might join our table. We gladly agreed, but all I can recall of that merry evening is Behan dubbing me "the Balkan Metternich," though I regrettably lack the great Austrian Chancellor's diplomatic skills.

The current revival of Behan's saucily rambunctious, irreverently madcap **The Hostage** at the usually professional Irish Repertory Theatre is stultifyingly inept. Call it Amateur Hour at the Irish equivalent of Podunk. This shaky and messy production, admittedly inhibited by the cramped space, is hard to listen to and unbearable to look at. Yes, the denizens of a 1960 Dublin bordello are meant to be a motley crew, but not such a collection of unsightly freaks flailing about and bellowing with unchecked oafishness. There are a few exceptions: Erik Singer, though too tall for the shorties he plays opposite, is credible and touching as the title character; Barry McNabb (Rio Rita) is at least a deft dancer; and Anto Nolan, a bit toned down, might make a competent Pat.

The rest, however, appall, some of them—even those not meant to be—eyesores as well as bunglers, or so exaggeratedly clownish as to kill the jokes. I wish it were otherwise, but here I am forced to play the balking Metternich.

ANNE MEARA'S **Down the Garden Paths** is a chance for Eli Wallach and Anne Jackson, old hands or hams, to be funnier than their material, and for John Shea to show off his acting skills. But this is a thoroughly artificial, unnecessary piece, although an audience of mostly what the play calls *alter kockers* seemed to find it hugely hilarious. ■

A celebration of ten New Yorkers who make it happen— New York style.

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Tone Poems

On canvas, Evaristo Baschenis endowed musical instruments with lives of their own; Tony Cragg's sculptures involve an ever-changing array of materials.

The Still Lifes of Evaristo Baschenis: The Music of Silence is about as far from a blockbuster as you can get. The artist is virtually unknown outside Italy, and his main claim to fame, as the inventor of the subgenre of still-life paintings of musical instruments, is probably not going to drive the public mad with desire. While this first U.S. exhibition of Baschenis, at the Met, may do wonders for his market and elevate the prices of paintings by other Bergamese Baroque artists, its promo ops are limited: With just eighteen works on display, it does not exactly lend itself to a museum shop stocked with Baschenis ties and mugs. The Met should be applauded for putting its imprimatur on this low-carat gem of an exhibition.

Baschenis (1617–1677) was a painter, musician, priest, and "a great, mad gardener," in the words of Met curator Andrea Bayer, who organized this exhibition with the Accademia Carrara of Bergamo and the Superintendency of Milan. He lived in Bergamo, in the region of Lombardy, the cradle of Italian still-life painting. Bergamo was also a music center. In the accompanying publication, art historian Enrico De Pascale remarks that "among the cultivated noble and bourgeois classes, knowledge of instruments and musical performance was considered indispensable."

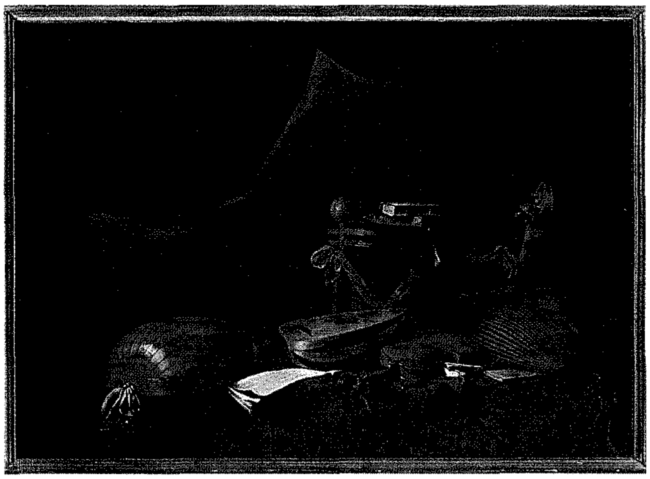
Baschenis had his own workshop and was well-known during his lifetime. He fell into oblivion around 1800 and was rediscovered when the Cubist still lifes of Braque and Picasso, many with musical instruments, were helping to transform the way art was made and seen.

Baschenis worked with just two motifs. One was the kitchen scene, often with dead fowls or utensils spread out on a table. The other was the still life with musical instruments; alongside the paintings, the Met has installed some fifteen of its beautiful Baroque instruments. Baschenis liked to place his own beloved lutes and violins facedown, which makes their rounded backs look like shells or gourds, or like natural creatures resting in someone's care. In the great central panel of the *Agliardi* triptych, a guitar lies strings-down on a spinet and knife and, with a bowl of fruit deposited on top of it, becomes an impromptu piece of furniture. All of Baschenis's work combines abandonment and order, abundance and restraint, informality and respect.

The exhibition includes a painting by Caravaggio (1571–1610), like Baschenis from Lombardy, whose still lifes Baschenis probably saw in Rome. In Caravaggio's *The Lute Player*, a young man is playing a lute, his musical score on a table. He is the focus of attention; the lute is *his* instrument. Baschenis's paintings have the spareness and dramatic lighting of Caravaggio's, but in his still lifes, the lutes, archlutes, violins, guitars, and cellos usually appear without human accompaniment. It is often hard to tell if they were ever played, and they don't appear to be waiting to be played or even used; they seem rather to be self-contained, instruments of a reality beyond human hands.

That reality is suggested by Baschenis's background walls, reminiscent of Caravaggio's but even more ethereal and indeterminate. In *Still Life of Musical Instruments With a Globe and Cabinet*, the drapery behind the table on which the instruments, ebony cabinet, and globe have been gathered seems to rise and reveal a wall that is not matter but space. Its porous field of shadow and light applies a gentle pressure to the objects and seems to be holding them in some way, or watching them, even granting them permission to remain in the light.

Artist with pluck: The instruments in Evaristo Baschenis's paintings don't always seem meant for playing.



For all their stillness and silence, Baschenis's paintings have a mysterious urgency. Those backgrounds suggest powerfully that no one can own one of these instruments—that even though they are on display, we viewers are ultimately inconsequential. They also help explain why we feel we have to pay attention *now*—because what we see could be called back at any moment. For Baschenis, painting was a way of remaining attuned to a sacred presence.

FOR THE PAST TWENTY YEARS, **Tony Cragg** has maintained a deep and moving belief that making and viewing sculpture offer essential ways of knowing. The quirky,

The Still Lifes of Evaristo Baschenis
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See Art listings for details.

Photograph courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

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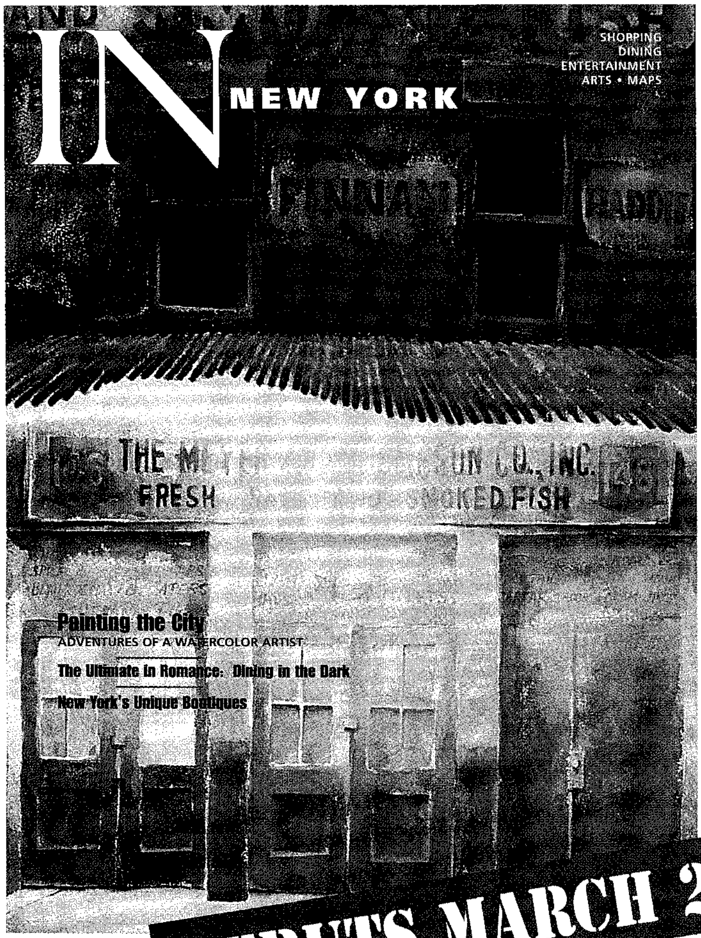
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playful, and yet disconcerting hybrids at the Marian Goodman Gallery are manifestations of his feverish curiosity and searching and his patient, hands-on sculptural investigation of many different materials. At 51, Cragg has never been more determined, through his work, to take the measure of a world moving so fast, in so many directions, that any attempt to grasp it seems increasingly hopeless.

In the company of Cragg's familiar yet strange and insistently tactile creations, it is only by distrusting appearances and investigating materials and processes that we have a chance to know what we see. *Formulation (Stance)* looks like a weird black rubber chair pieced together with five bulbous parts that resemble giant electric-typewriter balls. The sculpture evolved through many materials—including plaster, clay, latex, and polyurethane—and multiple stages of casting and firing, all of which clarify the look of the final bronze. *I'm Alive* is a horizontal sculpture that is almost Henry Moore–like in its part-human, part-landscape form, but it has a sinister-looking tail or stinger, and it is made of carbon. It lies near *One Way or Another,* an upright Jurassic-stone sculpture whose profile keeps shifting as we move around it. The stone seems infinitely stronger than the synthetic carbon, though one strand of the carbon is, in fact, stronger than a steel beam. The two works look as if they weigh roughly the same, but the carbon sculpture can be picked up by a teenager and the stone weighs 1,200 pounds. What you see does not reveal what is real.

It is hard to single out one sculpture in this remarkable show, but *Secretion (Urge)* will do. More than nine feet tall, its polystyrene body is coated with thousands of dice. It looks like something out of *Jurassic Park,* or like a freaky pal of Jeff Koons's *Puppy.* But it is disturbing as well as goofy. Every part of its body, starting with its two paws, seems to be moving in a different direction. The big, cocked-boxing-glove-shaped head seems malformed, and, without eyes, it appears to be growing without consciousness. Pretty much everything about this creature looks random and unmanageable and thus endowed with enormous power. Cragg's sculptures are as infectiously confident and upbeat as ever, but they are also spinning out of control. They exclude nothing, not even delirium and madness. ■

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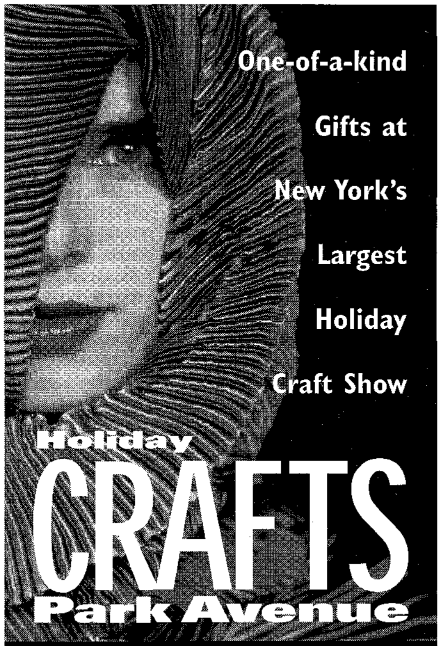

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Divine Divas

Roberta Peters, still in fine form, celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of her Met debut; Cheryl Studer returns triumphantly to the Met after a four-year hiatus.

IN 1950, WHEN 20-YEAR-OLD **Roberta Peters** charmed everyone at her Metropolitan Opera debut as Zerlina in *Don Giovanni,* the opera world was a different place. For one thing, in those days the Met actually was a company, in the familial as well as corporate sense. Peters was the youngest and last member of a generation of American singers who could legitimately call that house a home, remaining there for 34 seasons. She was also one of the last light coloraturas to carry on the decorative vocal traditions of Amelita Galli-Curci and Lily Pons, a style in which technical perfection and éclat took precedence over emotional weight and expressive depth. It was an art that had its limitations, but Peters has practiced it with honor and critical success during a long career, and in the face of formidable competition. In 1950 few had heard of Maria Callas, then a young singer making a stir in Italy, while Joan Sutherland, Montserrat Caballé, and Beverly Sills were totally unknown, divas who would soon change everyone's idea of how the classic lyric-coloratura repertory should be sung.

How ironic that they are now either retired or figures of dusty legend while Peters, who shared many roles with them even if she never achieved comparable fame, carries on, sounding much as she always has. She recently celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of her Met debut with a recital at Alice Tully Hall, making few concessions to age. "Pert Bert," as she was affectionately called by Met standees in the fifties and sixties, never saw any reason to alter her approach to accommodate shifting tastes in vocal styles, and once again she delivered the goods on her own terms.

The reasons for her survival are not difficult to fathom: a naturally placed, brightly textured, unblemished high soprano; rigorous training from early youth; a disciplined lifestyle; and a fierce ambition that was always kept under control—Peters never pushed her voice in directions it didn't want to go.

Life upon the Met's stage: Roberta Peters, clockwise from top left, in *Un Ballo in Maschera* (1970); *L'Elisir d'Amore* (1961); *Don Giovanni* (1951–52); *Rigoletto* (1951–52).

Photographs: Metropolitan Opera Archives.

Roberta Peters
Fiftieth-anniversary recital at Alice Tully Hall.
•
Kidnapping in the Concert Hall
Composed by Mauricio Kagel; conducted by Reinbert De Leeuw, at Carnegie Hall.
•
Cheryl Studer
The Marschallin
In *Der Rosenkavalier*, at the Metropolitan Opera.

The good musical habits paid off best in the Italian soubrette repertory, although she was also a stunning Zerbinetta in Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos,* a part where her pinpoint coloratura accuracy and tonal clarity earned big dividends. She has always looked terrific, too.

During this anniversary recital, there were a few tense moments in Schubert's "The Shepherd on the Rock" and Norina's aria from *Don Pasquale* when the voice began to tire and unravel (an indisposition was announced). But Peters returned after intermission (in a different gown—ah, those were the days), sailed easily over the high C's of Magda's aria from Puccini's *La Rondine,* and discovered much musical beauty in her Tchaikovsky/Rachmaninoff selections. A model of discretion and assistance, Warren Jones was the perfect colleague at the piano, adding his own attractive baritone to Peters's perky rendition of a ragtime encore. An evening mainly for nostalgists perhaps, but also a salutary memento of an engaging singer and a hardy survivor.

SOMETIMES EVEN THE MOST POWERFUL musical works, especially those written for the stage, can seem hopelessly feeble when ineffectively presented. Perhaps Mauricio Kagel's **Kidnapping in the Concert Hall** is one of these unfortunate victims. The piece certainly failed to come off in Carnegie Hall, its second performance since the premiere in Amsterdam on November 7 with the same musicians: tenor Christoph Homberger, the Schoenberg Ensemble, and the Netherlands Chamber Choir conducted by Reinbert de Leeuw.

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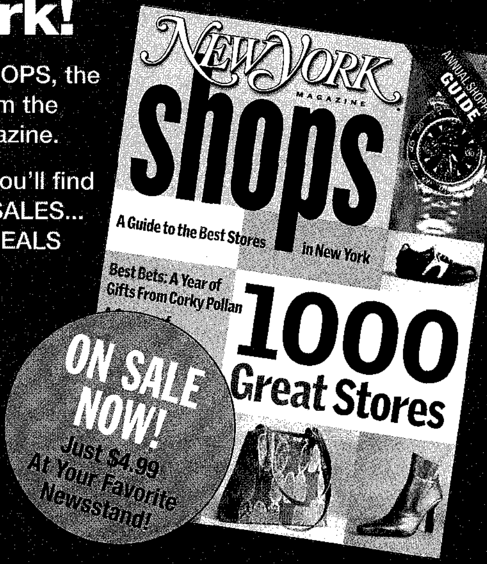
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Kagel sets up a whimsical situation where the conductor of a new work by a major composer arrives onstage to find most of the orchestra, chorus, and vocal soloists missing—kidnapped, actually, and being held hostage in a rehearsal room. For the next hour, the conductor struggles to perform the score as best he can while the kidnapper communicates threats over the house telephone and one soloist—the tenor, who has managed to escape—wanders about offering mystical commentary on the predicament, which remains unresolved as the piece peters out.

It's difficult to know exactly what Kagel wants us to take away from this surreal extravaganza. That all musical performance is ephemeral? Musicians are terribly vulnerable? Terrorism is bad for art? In any case, the watery music has little expressive urgency and even less theatrical impact compared to such earlier fun pieces as *Prince Igor Stravinsky, Ludwig van,* or *Staatstheater*. Perhaps it's time for Kagel to move on and give the whole genre a rest. *Kidnapping in the Concert Hall* seems distinctly *vieux jeu*.

TEN YEARS AGO, **Cheryl Studer** HAD THE opera world at her feet, performing and recording everything from Rossini and Verdi to Wagner and Strauss; her recording of *Salome* is perhaps the most sheerly gorgeous account of this music on disc. But soon Studer came to the Met, where she proved a disappointment, performing mostly Italian roles in which she seemed distracted and unfocused. After a 1996 performance of Strauss's *Four Last Songs* in Carnegie Hall that skirted vocal disaster, she returned to Europe and one began hearing even worse tales of woe. Now a rehabilitated Studer is back at the Met, as the Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier*, and the news is good. Despite some strain at the top, her soprano has regained much of its lustrous sheen and clarity, and she is singing the sort of role that best suits her temperament and musical instincts. I doubt if a native-speaking German could extract more nuance from the text or enunciate it with such point, while the aching phrases that end her affair with young Octavian are exquisitely shaped. Studer also moves easily and naturally over the stage, a gracious lady of the court who still lets us know just how deeply the private pain cuts. Let's hope that this absorbing performance is only a taste of better things to come. ■

TELEVISION JOHN LEONARD

The Time of Sands

John Harrison's adaptation of *Dune* for the Sci Fi Channel finds fantastical virtue in storytelling; *Queer As Folk* is as drearily one-note as *Sex and the City.*

Prophet of *Dune:* Alec Newman as Paul Atreides.

IF YOU HAVEN'T READ FRANK Herbert's science-fiction novel **Dune**, then I've got so much explaining to do that I'd rather not even get started. Before George Lucas, Herbert had clearly dined on Joseph Campbell's refried mythic beans, with lots of Rachel Carson for dessert, after which he hallucinated a space-operatic, eco-dystopian future that was part biblical, part Shakespearean, and extremely thirsty. There are Noble Houses competing for the Emperor's favor; a guild of Navigators who cruise the vast galactic wastes; a coven of witches with occult powers and a breeding program to insinuate their influence; and a coveted cinnamon-smelling "spice," more precious than oil or gold, a sort of magic mushroom without which space travel is impossible, only to be found on the desert planet of Arrakis.

On or about 10,091 A.D., Duke Leto of the House of Atreides is dispatched by the Emperor to Arrakis to superintend production of this spice. He brings with him his concubine, the Bene Gesserit witch Lady Jessica, and their son, Paul, who has weird dreams. They are betrayed from within and attacked from without by the evil Baron of the House of Harkonnen. Leaving behind a dead Duke, Lady Jessica and Paul flee into the arid dunes, where they meet gigantic carnivorous sandworms and the blue-eyed Fremen. Fortunately for everyone concerned, Paul's weird dreams correspond to the prophetic religion of the Fremen. After the usual sadistic tribal initiation rites (plus perhaps too much mind-bending spice), he can see into the vile past and the heroic future, and the Fremen are satisfied that he is indeed their Messiah. What follows is an amalgam not only of El Cid and Ho Chi Minh but also, with its echoes of the ancient Israelites and of Afrikaners on a rousing *Voortrek,* almost a how-to manual, like the Bible, on lurid visions, crazy violence, and abusive sex in a sun-stunned, worm-munched desert.

Dune
Sunday through Tuesday, December 4–6; 9 to 11 P.M.; The Sci Fi Channel; written and directed by John Harrison, based on the Frank Herbert novel; starring William Hurt, Saskia Reeves, and Giancarlo Giannini.

•

Queer As Folk
Sunday, December 3, 10 P.M. to 12 midnight; Sundays thereafter, 10 to 11 P.M.; Showtime; based on the British show of the same name.

•

Bruno
Friday, December 1; 8 to 9:45 P.M.; Starz!; directed by and starring Shirley MacLaine, with Kathy Bates and Gary Sinise.

You may recall that David Lynch spent a lot of Dino de Laurentiis's money to bring *Dune* to the big screen in 1984, with Kyle MacLachlan as the messianic Paul and the rock star Sting as a Harkonnen baddie so out of control that he upstaged the sandworms. While interesting to look at, it was incomprehensible to anybody who hadn't read the novel, not that Herbert's fans cared. But John Harrison, who has written and directed this six-hour TV mini-series version on the Sci Fi Channel, does care. He proselytizes, with two hours on Sunday that are, if not Shakespearean, at least feudal, with some Renaissance thrown in; two hours on Monday that are, if not biblical, at least tribal and survivalist, with lots of delphic utterances; and two concluding hours Tuesday in which, more or less, Harry Potter meets Lawrence of Arabia at either Agincourt or Khartoum.

I must say it's great fun. William Hurt as Duke Leto; Saskia Reeves as Lady Jessica; Ian McNeice as Baron Harkonnen; Alec Newman as Paul; Giancarlo Giannini as the Emperor; Julie Cox as Princess Irulan; Laura Burton as Paul's creepy kid sister, Alia; and Barbara Kodetova as his desert peach, Chani, almost make up for any doubts we may have about blue-eyed leadership cults and the romance of the jihad. What was best in Lynch (an Arrakis so drought-ridden and Sahara-like that my camel died) is missing from the mini-series, shot mostly on a Prague sound stage. But what was worst in Lynch (an indifference to narrative amounting to malign neglect) is also missing; Harrison is determined to tell this ecological fairy tale in baroque detail. Even the costumes are splendid, from Chinese mandarin to Student Prince, from Omar Sharif to the Vatican Guard.

"You are the whirlwind," says Chani to Paul after sex. That thump is not a sandworm.

Queer as Folk, THE NEW 22-HOUR DRAMATIC series on Showtime, is *Sex and the City* for gays and lesbians. Based on a popular and controversial British series,

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but set in Pittsburgh instead of Manchester, it is oral, anal, promiscuous, and so super-explicit that you will want to blinker your horses. It also seems to me sleazy, although no more so, at least conceptually, than Aaron Spelling's *Titans,* in which Yasmine Bleeth, like all the young men in *Queer as Folk,* never thinks about anything other than sex. Stud muffin Brian (Gale Harold), an advertising account executive, not only thinks about sex all the time; he also gets it all the time. His buddies Michael (Hal Sparks), Emmett (Peter Paige), and Ted (Scott Lowell) aren't so lucky at the dance club. They spend more time downloading porn from the Internet and renting video cassettes like *Schindler's Fist* (about "hot horny men in a concentration camp").

And then there is the very young Justin (Randy Harrison), who was 15 in the British version, is said to be 17 here, goes to parochial school in a uniform when he isn't cruising the drugs-and-disco scene for Brian, and has to have all the code words explained to him. Michael, moreover, has a worried mother looking over his shoulder, played to a frowsy fare-thee-well by Sharon Gless. And have I mentioned that Brian is the father of a child, born to his lesbian friend Lindsay (Thea Gill), a son he refuses to have circumcised, which explains the resentful rage of Lindsay's Jewish partner, Melanie (Michelle Clunie)? In the two-hour pilot, none of these people ever reads a book, or expresses a political opinion, or leaves the gym long enough to buy a loaf of bread. The best that can be said for *Queer as Folk* is that it depicts a portion of humanity heretofore absent from, or travestied by, a medium purporting to be representative. I find *Sex and the City* tiresome, too.

Bruno, IN WHICH SHIRLEY MACLAINE FOR the first time directs herself and everybody else, is one of those movies dumped directly on cable before it got a wide-screen chance. I'm not sure why; it's more intelligent than *Bounce.* Anyway, Bruno (Alex D. Linz) is a troubled little boy whose policeman father (Gary Sinise) left him to be raised by an overweight mother (Stacey Halprin), and who acts out at Catholic school by cross-dressing. Meaning, of course, that he is bullied and ridiculed not only by his classmates but also by Kathy Bates, as a chain-smoking mother superior. But from dreams in which he's chased by an angel, Bruno has come to believe that dresses are "holy vestments" with magical powers. With these powers, plus his single staunch friend (Kiami Davael) and a bossy grandmother (MacLaine), Bruno in a dress wins so many spelling bees that he gets to go to Rome to meet the pope. Jennifer Tilly, Lainie Kazan, and the late Gwen Verdon have cameos in this surprisingly affecting fable.

TV Notes

The Eyes of Tammy Faye (11/28; 8:30 to 10 P.M.; Cinemax), narrated by RuPaul Charles, seems at the start to be making cruel fun of the singing televangelist who wore too much mascara, as if Johnny Carson hadn't retired after all. But it quickly becomes clear that worse was done to her—by her corrupt ex-husband Jim Bakker, the oleaginous Jerry Falwell, the ever-obliging Jessica Hahn, even the gleeful media—than Tammy Faye ever did to anyone. Her "electric Christianity" at least reached out to include gays and AIDS patients. And her singing is much to be preferred to Christian rock groups like Creed.

David Blaine: Frozen in Time (11/29; 10 to 11 P.M.; ABC) will include the magician's escape after 58 hours inside a block of ice on the corner of Broadway and 44th Street (not included on the preview cassette because it will be live). Meanwhile, along with guest stars like Kevin Spacey, Lenny Kravitz, Michael J. Fox, and the Knicks, we watch him perform some lesser tricks and travel to exotic places.

Half Past Autumn: The Life and Works of Gordon Parks (11/30; 9 to 10:30 P.M.; HBO), produced by Denzel Washington, narrated by Alfre Woodard, celebrates the 88th birthday of the photographer, filmmaker, novelist, and musician, from Fort Scott, Kansas, where he was born, to New York City, where he became famous for his pictures in *Life* magazine, to Hollywood, where he wrote and directed *The Learning Tree.*

In His Life: The John Lennon Story (December 3; 9 to 11 P.M.; NBC), filmed on location in Liverpool, follows the Beatle from age 16 to age 24—from his first guitar to the *Ed Sullivan* show. With Blair Brown as the worried aunt who raised him, and Phillip McQuillan as a rough and passable John. Not only do we get the music the band covered in Liverpool and Hamburg, as well as the music they were beginning to write, but also a kind of memoryscape where *Abbey Road,* "Strawberry Fields," "Eleanor Rigby," and "Penny Lane" all show up, and it doesn't seem the least bit hokey. It just seems terribly sad. ■

cue

POP MUSIC ETHAN BROWN

Back From the Future

On *The W,* the famously inventive Wu-Tang Clan slows down for a victory lap around the old school, but their retread beats don't make the grade.

FROM THE TIME RUN-D.M.C. proclaimed themselves the "kings of rock," hip-hop's house has been built on a foundation of brags and boasts. But thanks to the proliferation of hip-hop media, which spreads the word separating the wicked from the wack, self-criticism is slowly becoming a fixture as well. On his new single, Queens rapper Noreaga apologizes for his ill-conceived solo album, and Canibus spends part of his new album acknowledging the shortcomings of his overhyped debut (though he blames them largely on his mentor, Wyclef Jean).

It's not as explicit, but the Wu-Tang Clan's new album, **The W** (Loud/Sony), could be interpreted as their own mea culpa for their portentous double album, *Wu-Tang Forever.* Without skits, gimmicks, or much in the way of innovation, the group reprises the sparse beats and chopsticky kung fu samples of their epochal debut, *Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers).* It's an odd move for a group that's always prided itself on musical and lyrical futurism, especially because, in the years since *Forever,* they've spun off forward-looking solo albums like RZA's *Bobby Digital* and Ol' Dirty Bastard's hilariously off-kilter send-up of the genre's flashy players.

The W is the sort of back-to-basics album that rock bands like the Who and the Rolling Stones used to make when they felt they were losing touch with their audience. It's capable but uninspiring—Wu by Numbers. Hardcore fans of the group will probably revel in production minutiae like the polyrhythmic snares on "Chamber Music," the sirenlike twang looped through "Protect Ya Neck (The Jump Off)," and the blunt, artillery-like percussion of "Careful (Click, Click)." For everyone else, *The W* will seem like a safe lap around the old school from a group that once set the pace so many others followed.

Wu-Tang Clan
The W
(Loud/Sony)
•
Prodigy
H.N.I.C
(Loud/Infamous)
•
Talib Kweli and Hi Tek
Reflection Eternal
(Rawkus/Priority)
•
Wookie
Wookie
(Soul 2 Soul)

Look, Wu's back: Clockwise from left, Inspectah Deck, U-God, Ghostface Killah, Cappadonna, GZA, RZA, Masta Killa, Method Man, and Raekwon.

In brief: The title of the first solo album from Mobb Deep rapper Prodigy, **H.N.I.C** (Loud/Infamous)—an abbreviation for Head Nigga in Charge—suggests the off-putting egoism of Jay-Z, but his rhymes have a sense of empathy, introspection, and consequence that's rare in hip-hop. "Don't forget your soul is involved," warns Prodigy in a thick, nasal Queens accent that's beginning to take on the authority of Rakim. "That same energy you put out comes right back and revolves." He doesn't deal in simplistic positivity, though: Prodigy's cautionary tales are backed by ornate soundscapes that make this rapper-producer the Ennio Morricone of hip-hop. . . . Talib Kweli and Hi Tek also take the high road on their debut, **Reflection Eternal** (Rawkus/Priority), even enlisting Gil Scott-Heron to deliver a shout-out. Like Prodigy, the duo is incisive enough to avoid coming off as preachy. "Where were you the day hip-hop died?" Kweli laments on "Too Late." But before smugly proclaiming its demise, he asks: "Is it too early to mourn? Is it too late to rise?" Sincere and plainspoken, Kweli has one of the most unusual voices in hip-hop. And Hi Tek, who in the past unimaginatively recycled a Boogie Down Productions beat on Black Star's "Definition," comes fully into his own, from the warm, vibrating synths of "Some Kind of Wonderful" to the Fela Kuti–influenced Afro-funk of "Africa Dream." . . . Bass is often at the heart of the most innovative music, from the soul-rattling low ends of dub reggae to the rear-end-moving groove of Detroit ghetto-tech. On **Wookie** (Soul 2 Soul), the English dance-music producer (born Jason Chue) avoids the cold clinicalness of drum and bass by marrying futuristic bass lines with a warmer past. He spikes turgid bass lines with organ on "Down on Me," adds flamenco guitar to elastic bass on "Back Up Back Up Back Up," and puts spiritual emptiness—"You lose your spirit at a cost and now your soul it will be lost," counsels vocalist Lain on "Battle"—onto the dance floor. Like Timbaland and Rodney Jerkins, Wookie is the rare producer who possesses awe-inspiring technical prowess as well as a sense of what makes people feel—and dance. ■

Photograph by Michael Lavine.

HAL RUBENSTEIN

Packing 'Em In

Macelleria, the meatpacking district's newest hotspot, has the low-key charm and easy dishes that made the area such a hit in the first place.

FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, FLORENT Morellet stood outside his shiny new outpost on Gansevoort Street, tickled by the way the light from Restaurant Florent menacingly cast the rows of meat hooks across the road, and divining how one day Manhattan's meatpacking district would be "just like Les Halles" in Paris, full of joie de vivre in addition to club-kid hip. His prediction was based on what he believed was an integral similarity between Americans and the French. "They both love going someplace dirty," he said. "Sleazy locations make them feel fabulous." Moments later, a well-tailored potential customer got out of a cab, teetered unsteadily in her open-toed Ferragamos across the cobblestones, and stumbled into a tureen-deep pool of milky white tallow. Her first scream scattered every rodent between Jane and 14th Streets. Her second got her former cab to stop. Undeterred, Florent offered that eyebrow-arched half-smile that every Gallic-accented charmer since Fernandel has invoked when reaffirming the inevitable. "She'll come back. And she'll bring her friends."

Locker Room: Diners at the meatpacking district's Macelleria.

Florent must feel like Nostradamus these days. Not only did she return, she changed her shoes. In fact, so formidable is the platoon of ladies in high-heeled boots that their combined perfumes almost obliterate the odor of the still-treacherous cobblestones. And while the success of nearby Pastis may be what finally turbocharged the area's current land rush to popularity, inside any McNally restaurant is a kingdom unto itself. Meanwhile, as you enter the buoyant tumult of **Macelleria**, it's apparent that owners Violetta and Sergio Bitici are wisely following the easygoing, crowd-pleasing guidelines set by the prescient Frenchman.

Macelleria
48 Gansevoort Street (212-741-2555). Lunch, Mon.–Fri. 12–3:30 P.M., Sat.–Sun. 12–4 P.M.; dinner, Mon.–Thurs. 5 P.M.–1 A.M., Fri.–Sat. to 2 A.M., Sun. to midnight; appetizers, $4.50 to $8.50; entrées, $13 to $26. All major credit cards.

The goal was to make a place with just enough style so you don't feel like you're slumming, but with not enough style to make you shift gears. The result? A lot of happy angels with dirty traces. Neither its high bricked walls nor its concrete floors and big sliding metal door betray the space's deliciously low beginnings as a meat locker. The seating plan is informal, almost too fluid, creating as many bottlenecks as you can find in a beer garden during Oktoberfest.

Then there is the internationally culled staff, more dutiful than focused. Some of their lapses are the result of second-language problems. (When we complained about some nearby smoking, our waiter promised to take care of it right away. He returned five minutes later, apologizing for forgetting to bring us an ashtray.) And some are the result of Macelleria's atmosphere, which encourages exuberance in its weekend clientele of the arm-flailing, "Hey, waiter!" sort that breaks the staff's rhythm and makes Manhattan natives wish their island were surrounded by drawbridges.

Will any of the above seriously test your jocularity level? As your cousin who wants to borrow money might tell you, "Everything is relative." If Macelleria surrounded you with long white damask and asked you to enjoy a $36 sautéed Muscovy duck breast while waiters kept pressing their thighs against your table trying to scooch by, weaker men could develop facial ticks before dessert. But when that bare wood table is boasting a snappy, crispy roasted duck in orange sauce for $16; clams casino that have more peppery spunk than they have bread crumbs for $7; a huge tender-aged and smartly seasoned sirloin for $26; and a lusciously heady fennel sausage crowning a bowl of garlic-bathed cannelini beans for $13, it doesn't take long to come up with a few other reasons why your fellow diners are getting pumped.

In the tradition of Lupa and Pearl Oyster Bar in the Village, Uncle Nick's on the West Side, and Gennaro's way uptown, Macelleria requires certain accommodations on your part for its lax but wallet-watching charm to succeed. The equation is not yet flawless. Volume, plus occasional overzealous wrist action with the salt shaker, causes the kitchen some consistency problems. Herb-grilled quails are delicious one night and street-pretzel brackish the next. A whole-herb baked Sarago is barely five minutes past

Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

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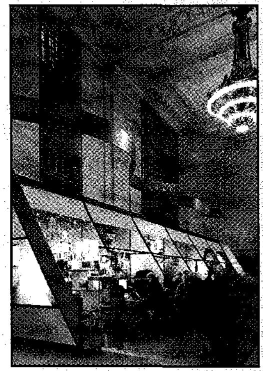
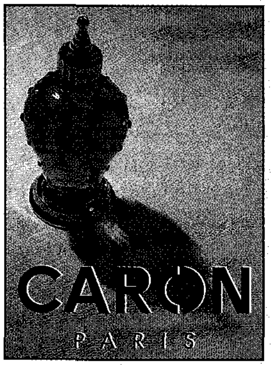


VINTAGE CARON PERFUME BOTTLE EXHIBITION On November 30th, join perfume bottle connoisseur Ken Leach at the Caron Boutique for an exclusive signing of his acclaimed book *Perfume Presentation—100 Years of Artistry*. The exhibition will run through December 7th during regular business hours. Call 212.809.2010 for more information. Caron Boutique, 675 Madison Avenue.



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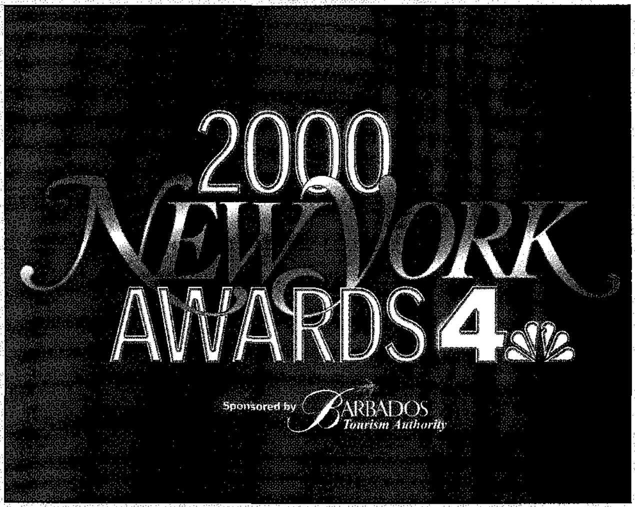
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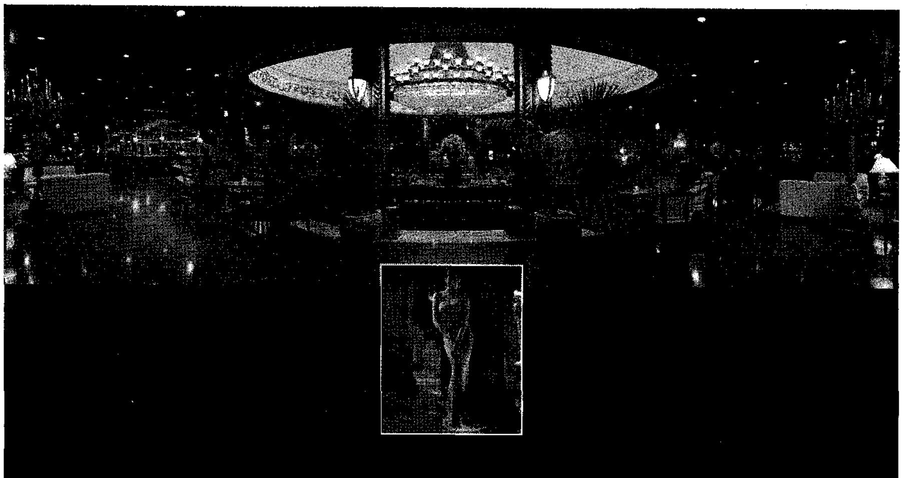

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capitalizing on its flaky fragrancy. The golden-skinned chicken has a pleasant red-wine sauce but tastes as if it had been baked dry. And though both the tortelloni and papardelle are generously portioned and heartily winter-ready, the respective wild-boar and oxtail sauces need more oomph not to get buried by the spice of any medium-bodied Italian red wine.

However, the pasta e fagioli almost beats not having a fireplace, it's fun to dunk duck livers in a thick herbed polenta, and linguini in garlic and oil—so simple it's almost always tricked up—is blissfully uninventive. A novel, barely sweet blueberry-sauced pork loin shook off any pancake allusions after the first bite. Unfortunately, all the desserts taste store-bought. There is effortlessness and then there is ordinariness. The latter is never a bargain.

"This is my kind of place!" exclaims the guy who flailed for the waiter. Is Macelleria your kind of place? Well, it's what folks come down to the meatpacking district for. Something easy, something fun, somewhere you can misbehave—a little—and not have to sit opposite Regis to pay for it. Just the way Florent envisioned it would be. Except he never factored in the heels. But then, if you've ever been down to Florent's spectacular Gansevoort Street Bastille Day celebration, you'd see why he never gave it a second thought: He walks in them more effortlessly than you do.

AN ASIDE: RARE IS THE FLAILER WHO does not have a partner of equal self-importance and obliviousness. So it was no surprise that while the King of Short Hills was swaying in the wind, his wife was "putting on her face" at the table. Foundation, mascara, blush, spray perfume. If she'd had a vanity mirror, she might have plucked. If only she were alone in this. Dear ladies and friends, there are bathrooms in every restaurant. With mirrors and lights—and privacy. Men have always forgiven you for applying lipstick at tableside. After all, chewing predates Revlon's permanent color. However, would you like to see him reapply his deodorant, clean his ears, shave with leftover Evian and a disposable razor? It's really no different. Even if your arsenal comes out of a Fendi baguette, it's bad manners. Keep it up, and don't blame me if you begin smelling Right Guard instead of nutmeg with his cappuccino. ■

CELEBRATE THE SEASON

A Guide to Holiday Gifts and Gatherings

Once again, the holidays are upon us. As usual, we're running around in search of suggestions for ideal gifts and gathering spots. At no other time of the year are we so lucky to live in New York City. The range of choices, from the classic and traditional to the hip and funky is endless. This year's guide provides inspired gift ideas as well as fun locales in which to toast the holidays with friends and loved ones. Originality and thoughtfulness are guaranteed.

Beverly Hood Allen, Creative Services Director * Christy Casamassima, Editor * Bolle Design, Creative * Lauren Price, Writer * Lory Conklin, Research

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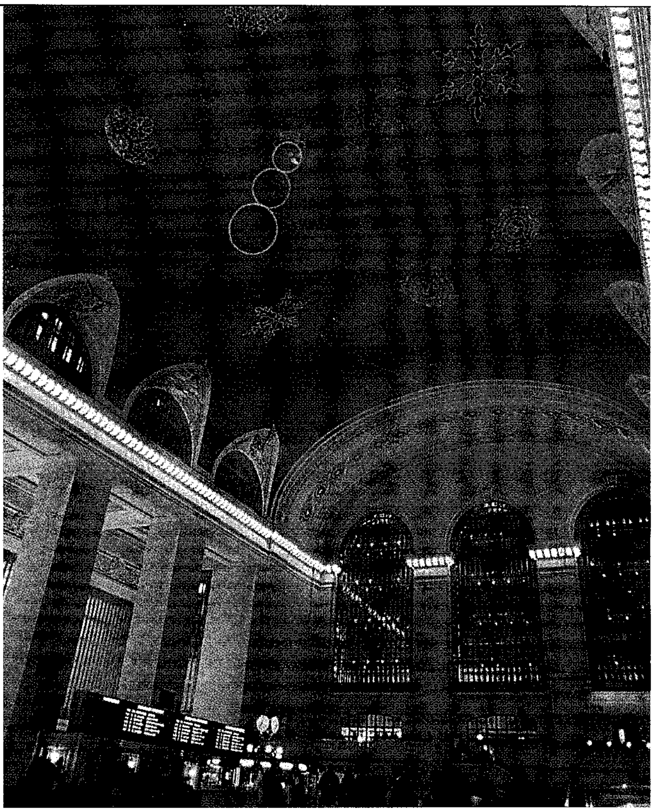
Through December 24

If you missed last year's Holiday Fair, here's another chance. Vanderbilt Hall transforms into a wonderful bazaar of over 70 shops offering excellent choices (more than 40 percent are new this year). Shopping for holiday gifts could not be easier. Don't miss the miniature wooden toy sculpture of Grand Central Terminal with over 100 handmade animated people going about their day. With an old-fashioned crank, visitors can actually make everything move themselves. While you're marveling at the sights, stop at the Dining Concourse with 18 different restaurants. In fact, Two Boots' newest location is here with its unique pizza toppings and fabulous crisp crust (the secret is the cornmeal kneaded in at the end). Whether shopping, dining, or just admiring the extensive renovations, Grand Central is a must-visit destination this season.



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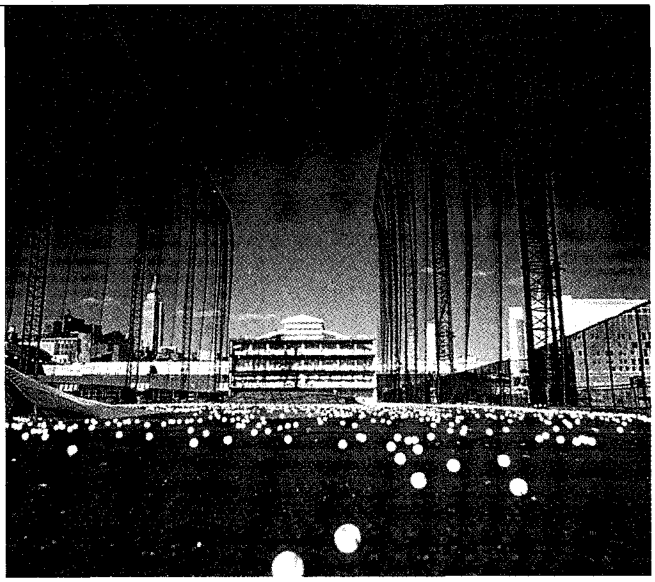

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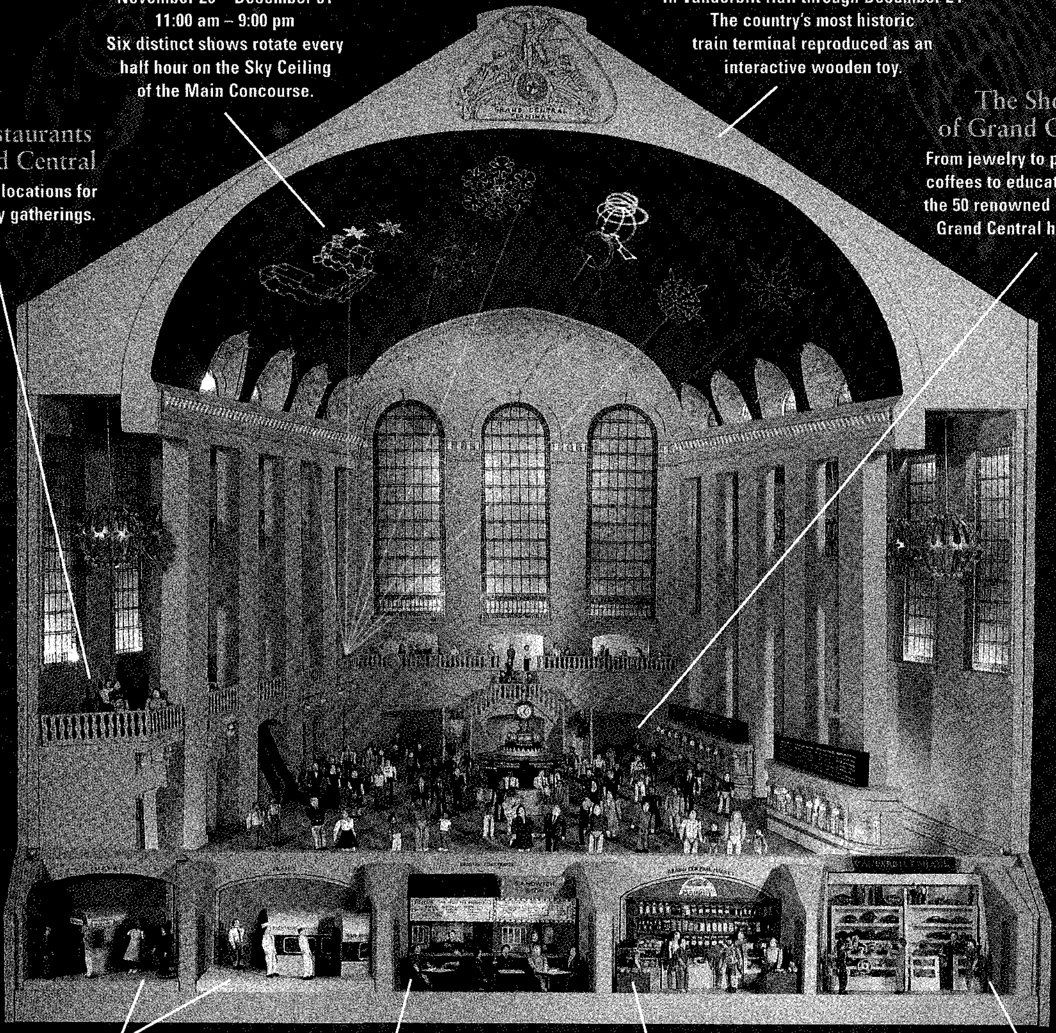

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Dining Concourse

Lower Level
18 international restaurants provide the perfect break from holiday shopping.

Grand Central Market

New York's most exciting European-style Food Hall, featuring fresh foods for holiday entertaining and gifts.

Vanderbilt Hall Holiday Fair

November 20 – December 24
Monday – Saturday: 10:00 am – 8:00 pm
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72 unique specialty merchants present a wide assortment of gift items.

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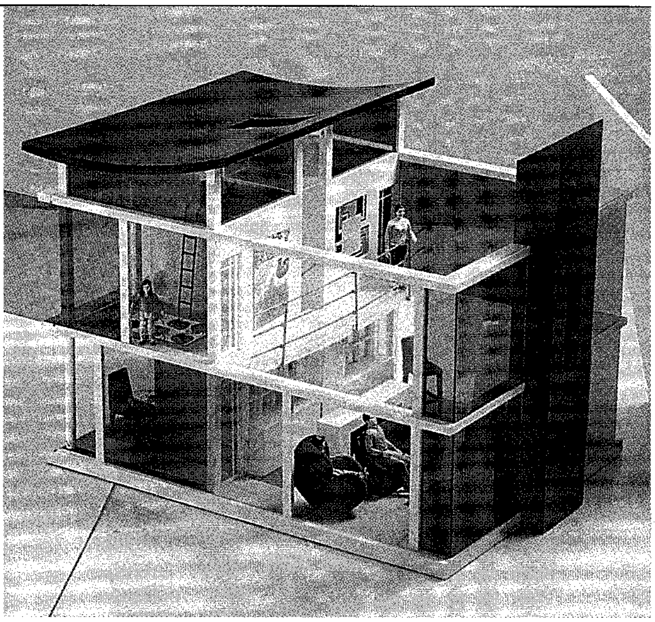
THE MOMA DESIGN STORE

44 W. 53rd St.
1-800-793-3167
www.momastore.org
Saturday - Thursday, 10 a.m. - 6:30 p.m., Friday until 8 p.m.

It's no surprise that one of the world's leading museums is not only home to some of the greatest works of art of the late 19th and 20th centuries, but also one of the best design-driven stores in the world. Always a terrific spot for wonderfully unique purchases, the MoMA Design Store now offers several ways to shop. Shop in-person on 53rd, visit online, or leaf through their catalog. It's a great place for almost anything, from office equipment to furniture, tableware to tools. Current favorites include the Marianne Brandt Bauhaus cocktail shaker and the Guglielmo Berchicci magazine rack.



Kaleidoscope Dollhouse and Furniture
This amazingly designed interactive house – complete with sliding, interchangeable translucent color walls – is an architectural gem. For kids and grownups from six to 60-plus, the 25 easy-snap pieces take no more than 30 minutes to assemble.

RADIO CITY ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS "A CHRISTMAS CAROL" THEATER AT MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

32nd Street and Seventh Avenue
Tickets at Ticketmaster 212-307-4111; www.ticketmaster.com, Garden or Radio City box offices

For the seventh dazzling season of this magical musical, Tony Award-winning (not to mention more than a few Golden Globes and Emmys) Frank Langella portrays the curmudgeonly Ebenezer. Add an extraordinary musical score by the composer of *Aladdin* and *Beauty and the Beast* and the same choreographer of *Contact* and *Music Man* and you get an unforgettable holiday gift that's perfect for the whole family. And it all begins in the lobby – set up as a 19th century Victorian marketplace. The show-stopping indoor snowfall delights everyone! The only bad part? It's all over on December 31, so you'd better hurry!

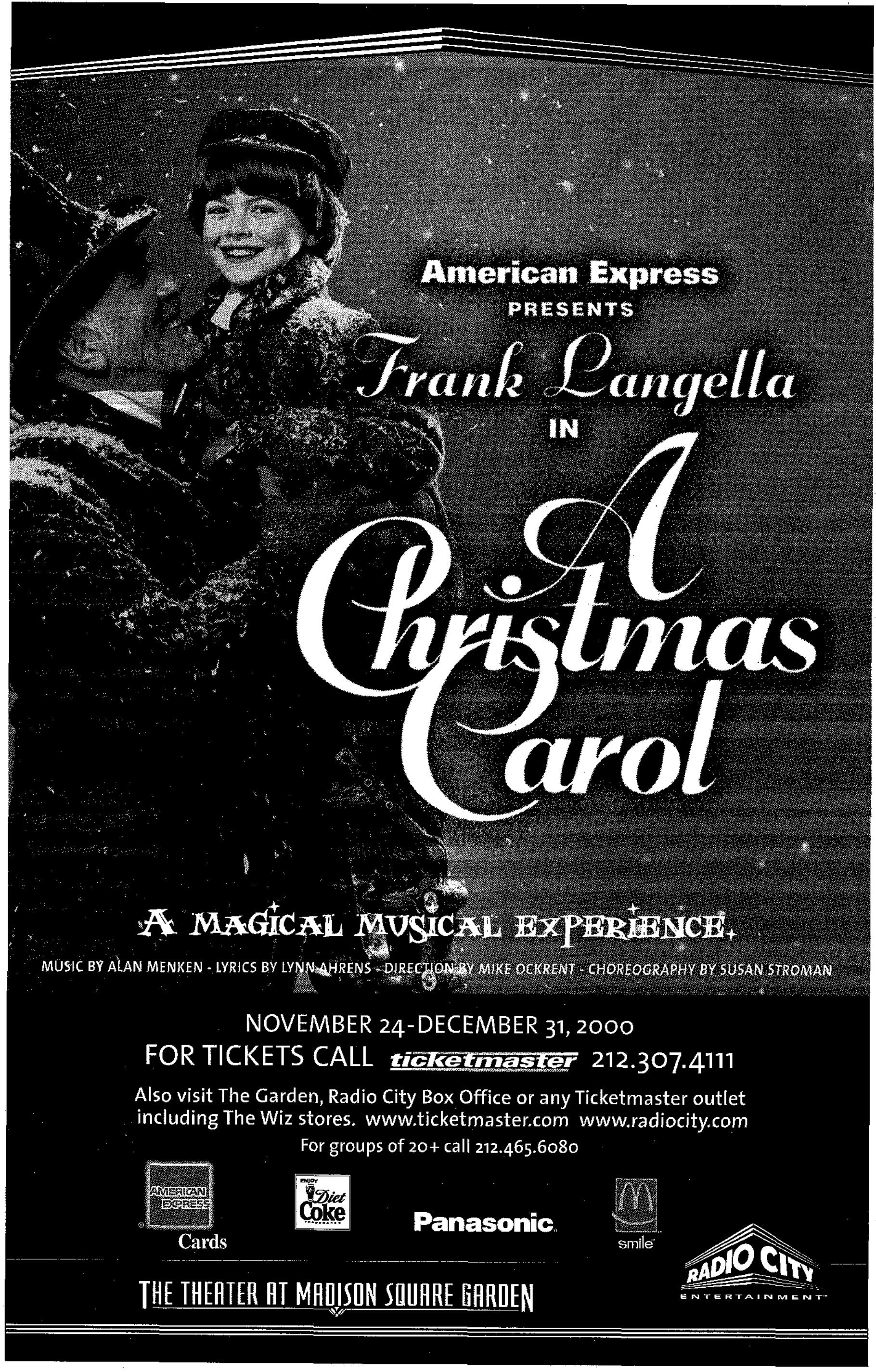
Frank Langella
A Christmas Carol
With music by Alan Menken and Lynn Ahrens, under the direction of Mike Ockrent, and choreography by Susan Stroman, this heart-stopping show lives up to all the critical acclaim. Called "A miracle on 33rd Street" and "A splashy spectacle," it's the perfect way to put the 'Merry' in Merry Christmas!

RITZ FURS

107 West 57th St.
265-4559
www.ritzfurs.com
Monday - Saturday,
9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Sunday, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
November and December

A legend on 57th Street for over 50 years, Ritz Furs must be doing something right. Although famous for their high quality pre-owned furs and shearlings at a fraction of the original cost, the shop does carry an extensive line of new items. Ritz Furs' new collection of fur-trimmed coats are made from the finest of wools and cashmeres. If coats, capes, hats, and such are not quite what you're looking for, the Ritz Zoo Crew is a wonderful selection of stuffed animals – bears, lions, monkeys – even elephants – made from recycled fur.

Leave It To Beaver
It's your chance to buy the coat you've always wanted at a great price. A knee-length sheared beaver is a style that is thoroughly modern for day or evening. The collar trimmed in fox adds a dash of luxe.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Frank Langella
IN
A Christmas Carol
A MAGICAL MUSICAL EXPERIENCE.
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NOVEMBER 24-DECEMBER 31, 2000
FOR TICKETS CALL ticketmaster 212.307.4111
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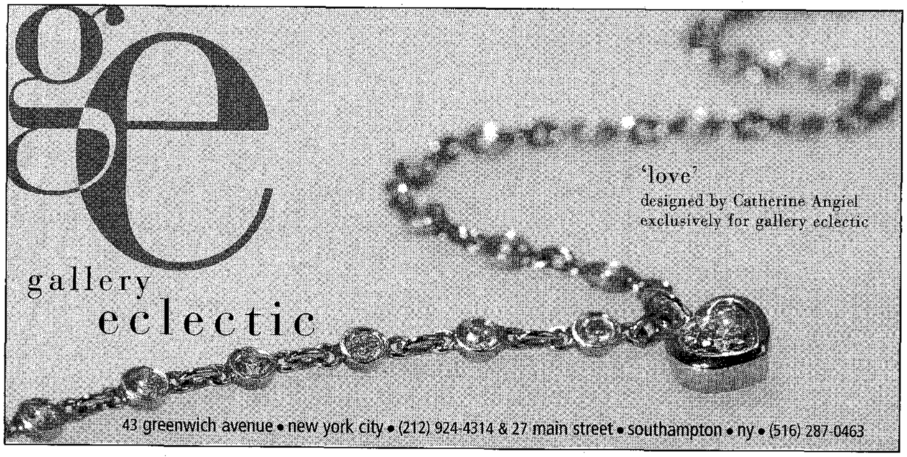
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ARTEMIS RECORDS

Available wherever music is sold
www.artemisrecords.com

Steve Earle, Baha Men, and Rickie Lee Jones are just a few of the artists available on CD this holiday season for the music lovers in your life. The Baha Men took this year's Subway Series in New York by storm with their near-anthem, *Who Let the Dogs Out*, the hit song and title of their double-platinum album. The song is also featured in Paramount Pictures newly-released *Rugrats in Paris*. Rickie Lee Jones' latest, *It's Like This*, features this beloved artist covering 11 classics ranging from Traffic's *Low Spark of High Heeled Boys* to Steely Dan's *Show Biz Kids* and The Beatles' *For No One*. There are also cuts from *West Side Story* and Frank Sinatra. Guest vocal appearances include Joe Jackson and Ben Folds of Ben Folds Five.

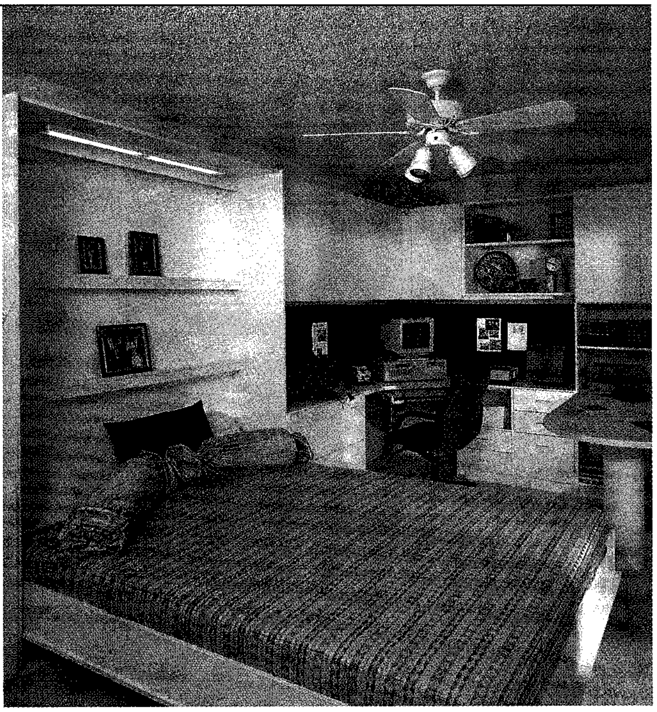
steve earle
TRANSCENDENTAL BLUES

Steve Earle/*Transcendental Blues*
Seven-time Grammy nominee Steve Earle's newest CD, *Transcendental Blues*, should top holiday gift lists this year. *Transcendental Blues Live* the companion home video featuring Steve Earle & The Dukes, is an entire live concert of old Earle favorites along with his new material and also includes the music videos of *Transcendental Blues* and *Over Yonder (Jonathan's Song)*.

TECHLINE STUDIO

35 E. 19th St.
674-1813
www.techline-ny.com

Working at home has always had its challenges. Finding the right space is unquestionably crucial, but getting it to look good is the hard part. Techline Studio can solve these dilemmas with their broad range of services. They do everything from site measuring to installation and all work includes a five-year warranty. Techline's design experts (including architects) truly recognize your work-at-home needs by offering innovative fabric panels, rounded edges to soften functional shapes, and modular pieces custom-cut to fit around the trickiest walls and pipes. The studio even created "wire management" to conceal unsightly tangles of electrical cords. A fabulous gift for your loved ones or, dare we say it, even yourself this holiday season!



Two for One
For that hardly-ever-used guest room, consider Techline's 18-inch deep wall bed that lets you create a fully functioning office while retaining the ability to host friends and family at a moment's notice.

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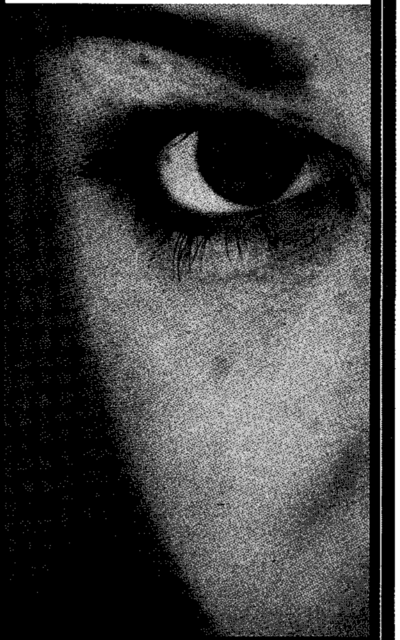
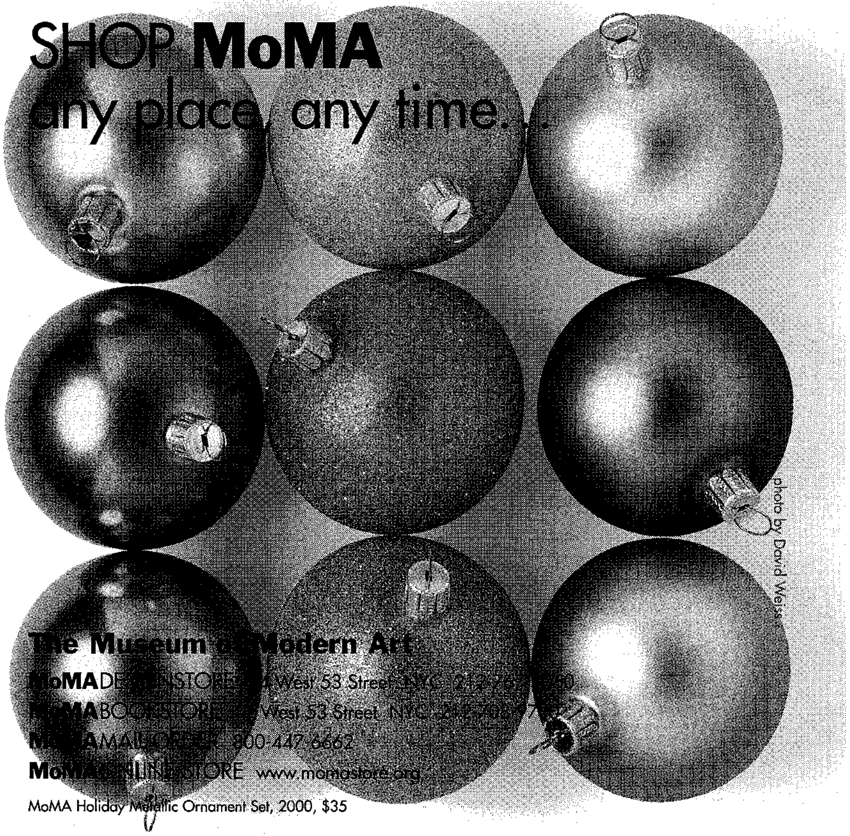
9 W. 14th St.
242-0314
www unionsq.com
Monday - Friday,
10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Saturday, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Union Square Optical has always managed to offer cutting-edge frames in a personalized, friendly ambience. Stop in this season and try the Eyeweb. With the latest technology, Eyeweb lets you log on to Union Square's Web site and use the "virtual try-on" feature in the privacy of your home to sample thousands of styles, colors, and shapes. First, visit the store to get "imaged." It's free and takes just minutes. Your image is then uploaded to their server – letting you log on to your computer whenever you like. And that's when the fun begins. You even get to adjust fits and lens tints. You can take all the time you want and choose the frames that truly suit your style.





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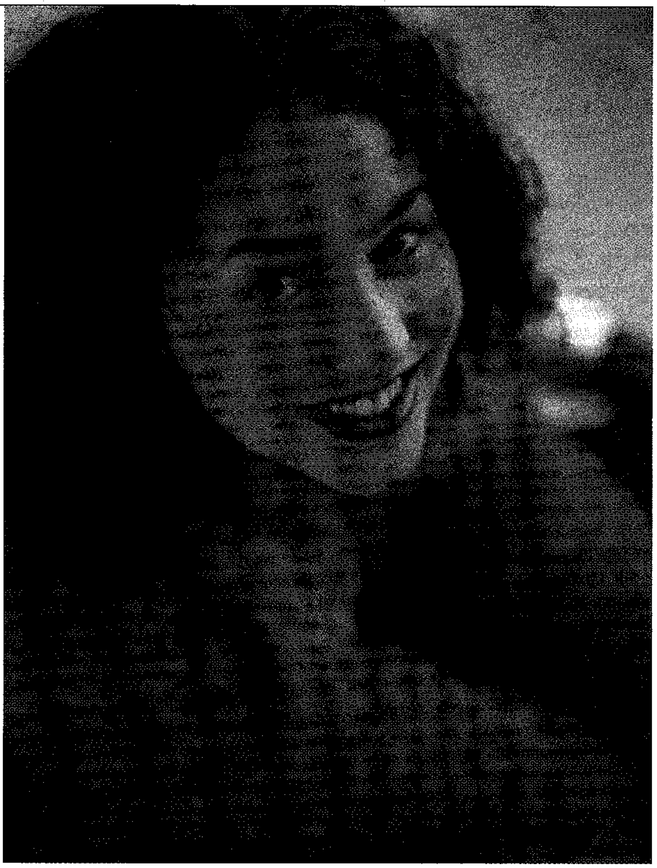
www.liaschorr.com
Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Saturday - Sunday, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.

After 22 years on Lexington Avenue, Lia Schorr continues to personally greet each and every client. Her splendidly wrapped gift certificates at holiday time (one year to redeem) make great stocking-stuffers for the special woman or man in your life. Through December 31, Lia Schorr Skin Care offers well-priced packages for personal holiday primping. The Holiday Spa package includes body massage, seaweed body wrap, body scrub, and a reflexology foot massage for $190 instead of the usual $260. The half-day spa package incorporates a European facial and full-body massage with a paraffin manicure and pedicure and a reflexology foot massage for $195 instead of the customary $263. If you buy a package of six facials or six body massages, it's $375, with one free pedicure.



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883-6620 (call for locations in Westchester and CT)
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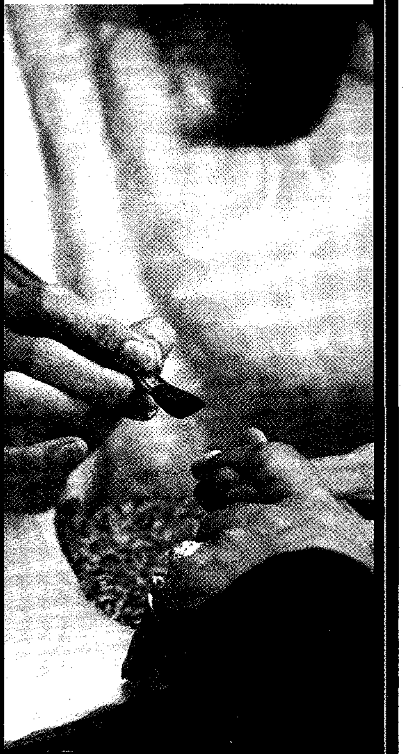
Saturday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
www.internationalhairsalon.com

In a larger new location, International Hair Salon continues to specialize in helping women with hair loss and thinning hair, using solutions that go well beyond wigs. The salon's experts employ innovative techniques for adding hair and using professional therapies for extensions, volumizing, weaving/bonding, and scalp treatments. Gift certificates are available for all their services – not to mention their innovative hair styles created by Angelo David and Mr. Carmine.

N&J NAILS SKIN CARE

66 W. 39th St.
391-8953
Monday - Friday, 9:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.

This very special salon caters to the world of fashion, including its models. The salon offers the usual manicures, pedicures, nail extensions and, tips – but it also offers a menu of more unique procedures. Paraffin body wraps, body scrubs, facials, and herbal wraps (using Dead Sea products imported from Israel) are just a few of the pampering services available. A European Pedicure entails hot compresses and skin exfoliation scrubs combined with a reflexology foot massage. Full- and half-day packages make perfect gifts for the holidays and beyond. Call for details. Appointments are recommended.



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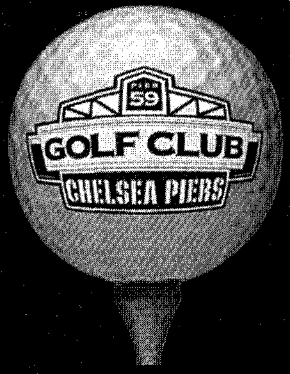

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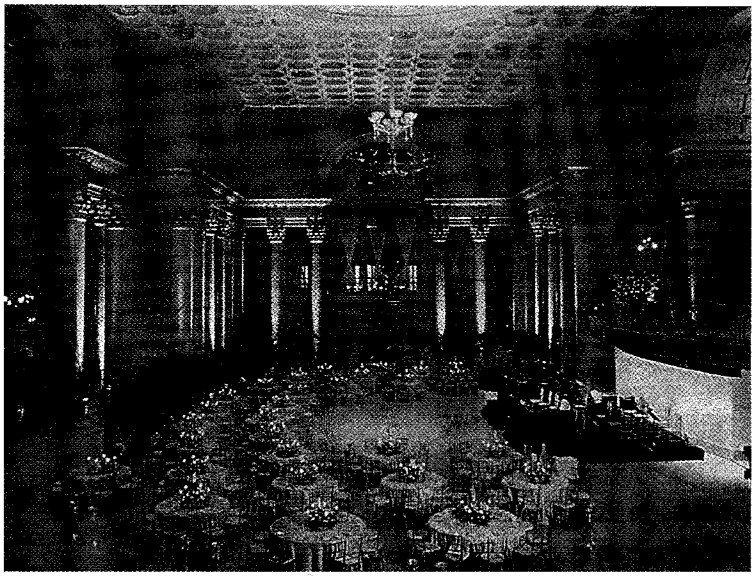
THE REGENT WALL STREET

55 Wall Street
212 845-8600; www.regenthotels.com

If you think nothing can beat last year's millennium celebration, then consider the New Year's Eve package offered by the Regent Wall Street. Fly roundtrip from anywhere in the continental United States, arrive and depart the airport by limousine, and drink Champagne upon arrival in your Italian turn-of-the-century Deluxe Loft Suite. The suite features an enormous marble bathroom, which includes a six-foot soaking tub for two. But here's the piece de résistance! You'll have private use of the hotel's glorious 12,000 square-foot Regent Ballroom for the evening, live music for your very own listening pleasure, and a seven-course tasting menu prepared by the hotel's award-winning executive chef, John Halligan. It's all topped off by breakfast in bed the next morning. The all-inclusive cost of this fabulous package starts at $10,000. And, if you think you need the company of good friends, it can be arranged for an additional cost per person. Hurry and reserve the package now. Remember, there's only one Regent Ballroom!

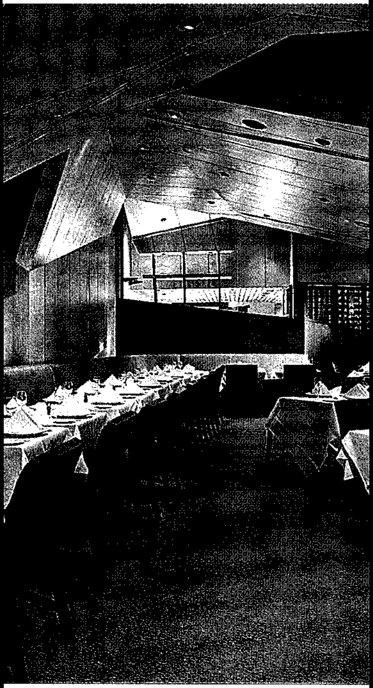


A Truly Grand Ballroom
Whether it's an intimate twosome or a group of 1,000, the grand ballroom is truly majestic, at more than half the size of Grand Central Terminal. Built over 150 years ago as a "Merchant's Exchange," the ballroom has the largest Wedgwood dome in the world, lofty arched windows framed with Corinthian columns, a 2,700-pound chandelier, and floors and walls tiled with Botticini marble.

NICK & STEF'S STEAKHOUSE

9 Penn Plaza, West 33rd Street between Seventh and Eighth avenues
563-4444 for reservations; Open daily

Twice nominated "Chef of the Year" by The James Beard Foundation, Joachim Splichal has brought his interpretation of a classic steakhouse to New York. Along with the customary emphasis on the highest quality meat, the talented kitchen staff entices diners in 12 diverse and exceptional ways: Pick and choose from 12 starters and salads, 12 vegetables, 12 potatoes, 12 sauces, and 12 steaks, chops and grilled dishes. As an example, the wonderful choice of vegetables ranges from creamed spinach with a bacon and garlic crust to whole roasted beets with an incredibly intense horseradish cream – and everything else in between! The menu even boasts superb options for non-steak eaters. And the more than 300 wine choices makes celebrating the holiday particularly special here. And don't try leaving without tasting the banana cream pie with a vanilla bean coulis.



Starters, Salads, Sauces Oh My Joachim Splichal has brought his culinary magic to New York and just in time for the holidays. His new restaurant is located within Madison Square Garden, so event-goers have easy access to Splichal's wonderful food. After having enjoyed marvelous seasonal performances such as *A Christmas Carol*, with Tony Award winning Frank Langella, dinner at Nick & Stef's is a perfect holiday ending to a seasonal celebration.

The Fine Art of Giving

Empire City Charm Bracelet Created for the Museum's exhibition. This bracelet's charms represent six of New York's skyscrapers and landmarks: The Brooklyn Bridge, the Chrysler Building, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Statue of Liberty, the Washington Square Arch, and the Flatiron Building. Sterling silver. **$150**

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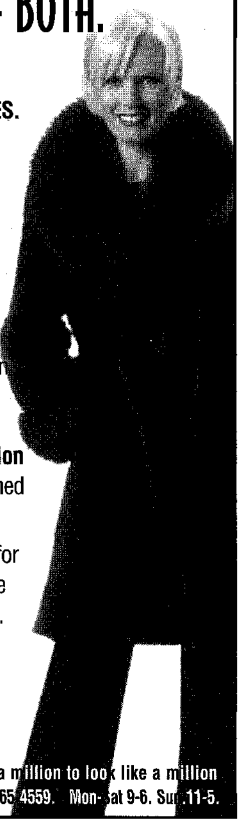

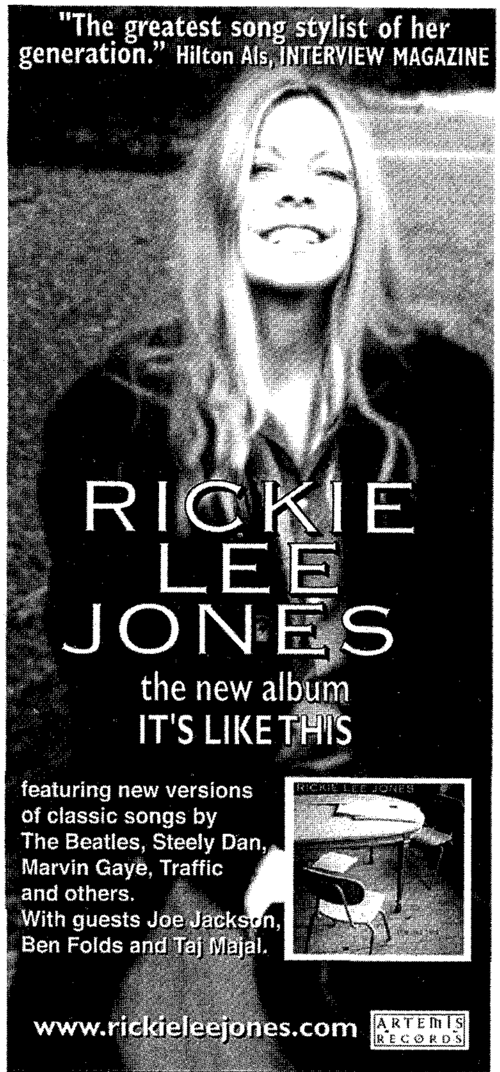
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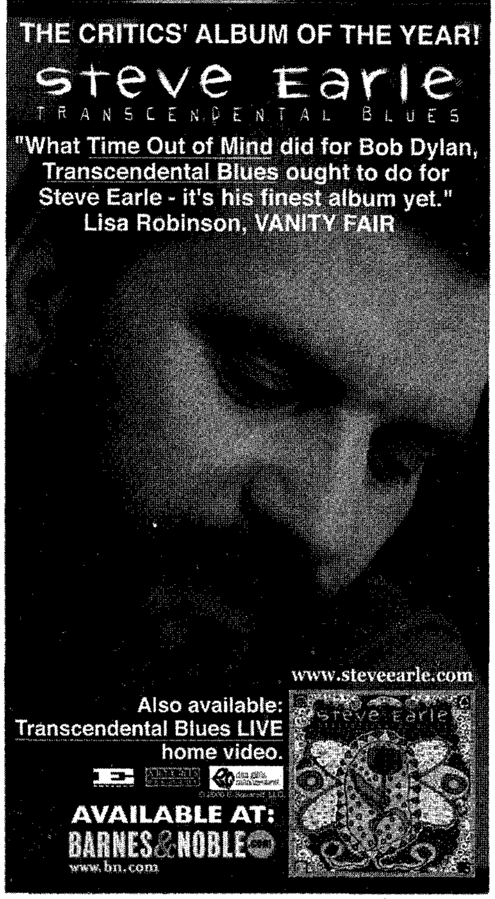
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steve earle
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Friday - Saturday, 5 p.m. - 12:30 a.m.

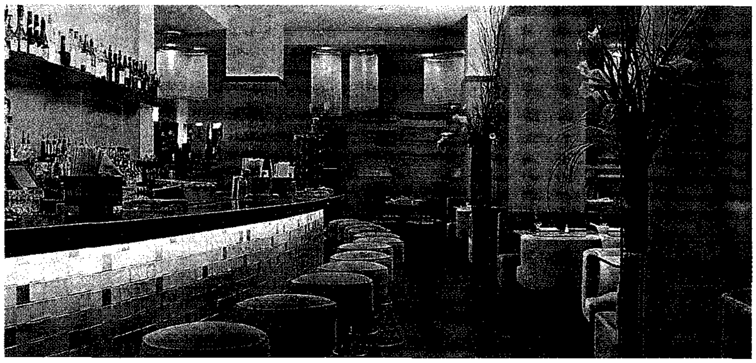
The hottest addition to the Upper West Side is the just-opened (and incredibly trendy) Neo. Chef Neo turns up here by way of Asia – and brings some amazing culinary surprises. It's not that you can't get the customary soy sauce for your sushi; it's just that Neo has developed his own fusion sauces for every variety of fish. Tuna sushi gets a heavenly tofu sauce, white fish gets a savory garlic sauce, and salmon is topped with a wonderful aioli. Even eel is different here. It's brilliantly chopped, then stacked on avocado which, in turn, is presented on a ball of white rice. Enjoy the large sushi bar and Sunday brunches starting in January.

French-Asian Fusion Fare
Inspired choices, including superior sushi, are on the menu at Neo.

L'ACTUEL

145 E. 50th St., 583-0001
Daily, 5:30 p.m. - 11:30 p.m.; Saturday Brunch, noon - 4:30 p.m.

Only a year old and already well established as fashionable and cool. The bar/lounge known as Blink unquestionably adds to the "hip" quotient. Order the fresh chilled seafood served pedestal-style and you feel like you're feasting in the heart of Paris. Alsacian pizza is a specialty here (known as Tarte Flambée and all the Gratinée you can eat on Mondays for $20), the Saturday buffet lunch, and the live jazz on Fridays and Saturdays all add up to a grand time.



Vive La France
A French brasserie with a twist, diners can find the usual French favorites and so much more, including a Saturday buffet lunch and live jazz on weekends.

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www.applebees.com
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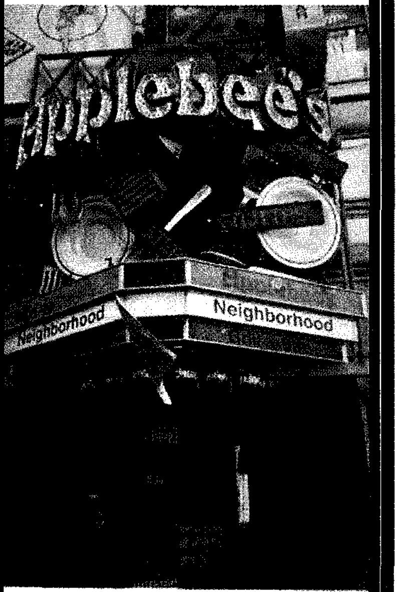
the movie theater)
945-3277
Daily, 11 a.m. - 1 a.m.

With over 1,200 Applebee's throughout the country, New Yorkers can now eat at either of the two Manhattan locations any day of the week, almost any hour of the day. Great burgers, a huge salad selection, and breakfast offerings ranging from super muffins to bacon and eggs makes Applebee's the place to go whenever you're hungry.



A Taste of the Big Apple
Genuine Broadway theater costumes and New York-inspired photographs are just some of the memorabilia that can be found on Applebee's walls. In concert with restaurant chain's theme called "Hometown Heroes," these city artifacts produce a relaxed neighborhood experience from years past to present day.

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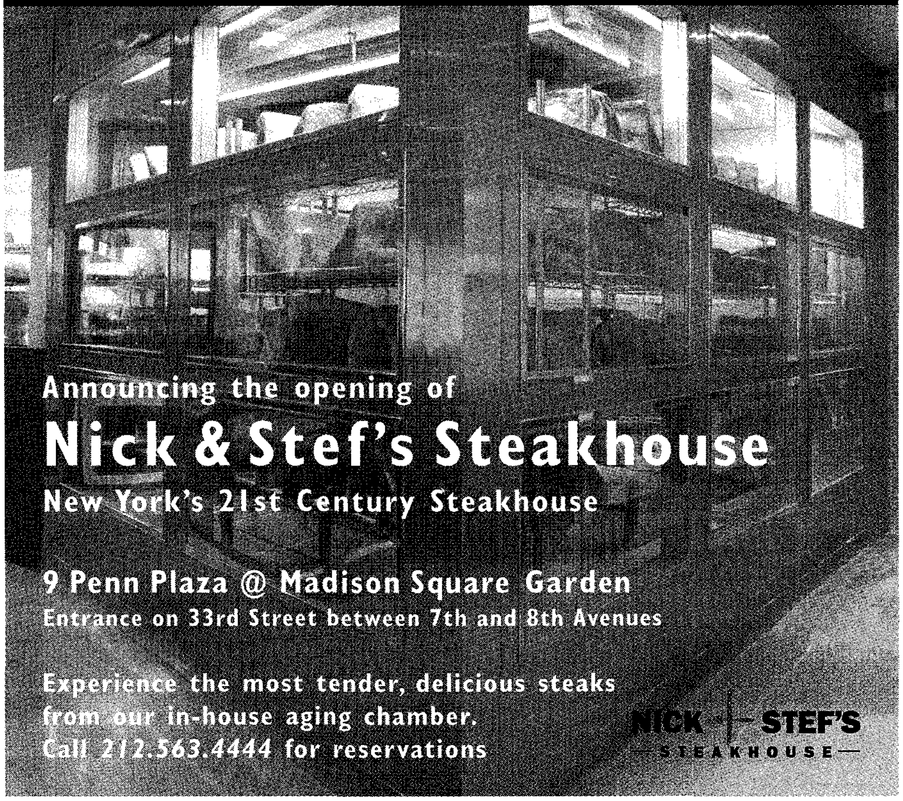

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Nick & Stef's Steakhouse

New York's 21st Century Steakhouse

9 Penn Plaza @ Madison Square Garden
Entrance on 33rd Street between 7th and 8th Avenues

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-William Grimes
NY Times

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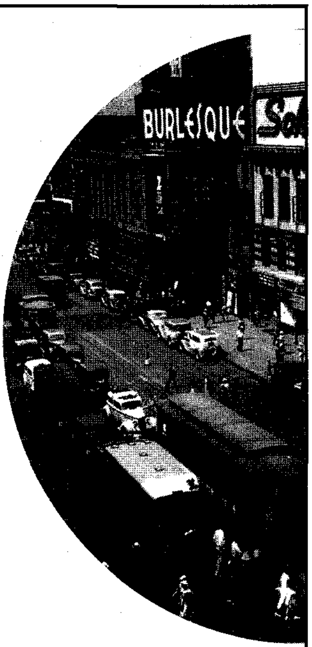

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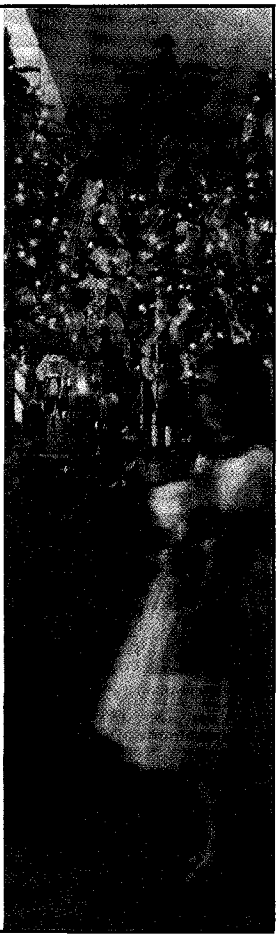

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cue Movies

Edited by Derek de Koff

This Week's Releases

A Hard Day's Night
Richard Lester's seminal 1964 comedy, which won Academy Award nominations for Best Screenplay and Best Soundtrack, marked the Beatles' debut on the silver screen. For this release, prints are being struck from a fully restored negative of the rock-and-roll comedy. (1 hr. 34 mins.; G) • Opens 12/1.

Moon Shadow
Winner of the Special Jury Prize at the Berlin Film Festival, Alberto Simone's directorial debut stars Nino Manfredi as the elderly assistant of an Italian scientist (Tcheky Karyo) who is hired to remodel a recently inherited house in Sicily. As a result, both develop close relationships with the patients of a nearby therapeutic community. (1 hr. 22 mins.; NR) • Opens 12/1.

New Films

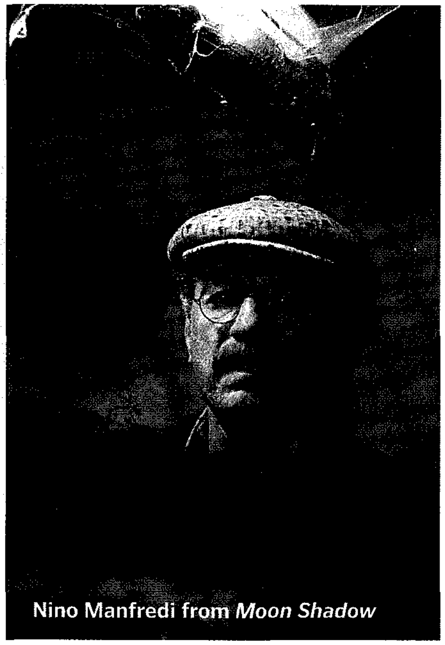
Animal Factory
Steve Buscemi's prison film stars Willem Dafoe as a notorious convict who takes under his wing a young newbie (an especially scrappy-looking Edward Furlong). (1 hr. 33 mins.; R) • Cinema Village.

★ Best in Show
A marvelous comedy about dog-show entrants and their prize pets. Christopher Guest, who also stars as the owner of a bloodhound named Hubert, was the director and co-writer (with cast member Eugene Levy), and the film is right up there with his mockumentary *Waiting for Guffman*. The other performers, including Catherine O'Hara, Michael McKean, and Fred Willard, bring their best revue-sketch instincts to the material. The real prize specimens in this movie parade about on two legs, not four. (Rainer; 10/2/00) (1 hr. 32 mins.; PG) • CC Village East; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews State; Loews 72nd St. East; Sony Lincoln Square; Kew Gardens Cinemas; North Shore Towers.

Bounce
Ben Affleck plays an ad executive who gives away his plane ticket to a man who dies when the plane crashes. Guilt-ridden, he tracks down the widow (Gwyneth Paltrow) and ends up falling in love with her. (1 hr. 42 mins.; PG-13) • Battery Park City Cinema; UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; CC Crown Gotham; Bay Plaza; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Atrium; UA Movies at Staten Island.

The Broken Hearts Club
A look at the ups, downs, and all-arounds of a group of gay friends in West Hollywood. Starring Timothy Olyphant, Dean Cain, and Matt McGrath. (1 hr. 34 mins.; R) • Quad Cinema.

★ Charlie's Angels
Cameron Diaz, Drew Barrymore, and Lucy Liu play the new generation of Angels in this daffy, spirited movie that also features a prize collection of male crazies, including Bill Murray, Tim Curry, and Crispin Glover. The music-video maven McG directed, and he understands why we're watching: to gawk at butt-stomping chicks in stretch-fabric actionwear having a high old time. (Rainer; 11/7/00) (1 hr. 43 mins.; PG) • Battery Park City Cinema; Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews Orpheum 7; UA Gemini; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Movies at Bayside; Atrium; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island; YWCA Cine-Club.


Nino Manfredi from *Moon Shadow*

Dark Days
Marc Singer's fascinating documentary about the legendary Mole People, homeless folk who live deep within the bowels of Manhattan's subway system. (1 hr. 20 mins.; NR) • Cinema Village.

Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas
Jim Carrey is the live-action embodiment of Dr. Seuss's classic Christmas grump. Ron Howard directs. (1 hr. 30 mins.; PG) • Battery Park City Cinema; UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews Coronet; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Olympia; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; New Coliseum; Nova; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Canarsie; Centre Sunnyside; Jackson Triplex; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island; YWCA Cine-Club.

★ George Washington
David Gordon Green, a first-time writer-director of feature films, has a light, lyrical, impressionist gift and a gentle, uncondescending approach to children's lives. Set in a southern town and featuring a cast of mostly African-American nonprofessional preteens, the movie is about the ways in which these children relate and survive. It's a genial dream-walk of a movie that could use a firmer strut. (Rainer; 11/6/00) (1 hr. 30 mins.; NR) • The Screening Room.

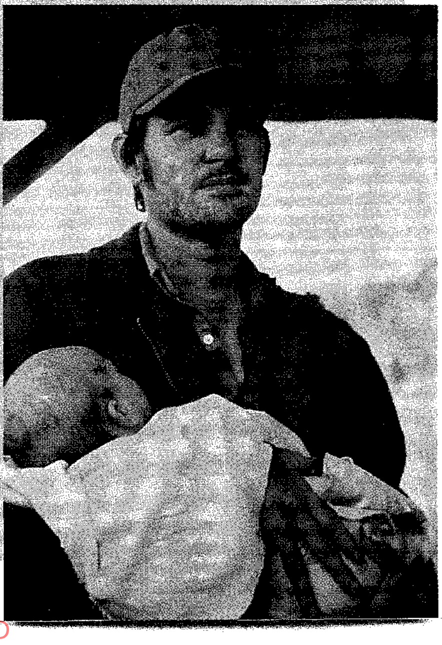
★ Girlfight
The best reason to see this film, written and directed by Karyn Kusama, is for Michelle Rodriguez's performance as a Brooklyn girl who finds an outlet for her aggressions in the ring. Rodriguez has an indrawn intensity that carries the movie while making you wish it were more than a melodrama with feminist-parable overtones. (Rainer; 10/9/00) (1 hr. 51 mins.; R) • Loews State.

Kippur
Israeli filmmaker Amos Gitai's surreal autobiographical

Opening

I've Got You, Babe

We seriously doubt there are many cineasts out there trying to piece together precisely what Henry Thomas (pictured) has been up to since his cherubic turns in *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial* and the spine-tingling *Cloak and Dagger*. Nevertheless, we have answers: In *A Good Baby*, the first feature-length film by New York director Katherine Dieckmann, a very, very grown-up Thomas stars as a North Carolina hunter who stumbles upon an abandoned newborn babe in the woods. His search to find the child's mother unearths a hodgepodge of eccentrics, including a fast-talking traveling salesman and a peculiarly beautiful girl eager to flee her small town. There are many surprises along the way, but if you're worried about this being some sort of rehash, rest assured: The foundling never tampers with a Speak & Spell, and Dee Wallace is nowhere to be found. A one-week engagement begins December 1 at the Walter Reade Theater at Lincoln Center, as part of the American Independent Visions series, and Dieckmann herself will be on hand December 2 for a Q&A session at 7:15 P.M.



ilm about 1973's Yom Kippur war. (2 hrs.; NR) • Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; North Shore Towers.

La Bûche
Three days before Christmas, three Parisian sisters try and fail at balancing the annual pressures of the holiday season with the more savory pressures of sex. Emmanuelle Béart, Sabine Azéma, and Charlotte Gainsbourg star. Directed by Danièle Thompson. (1 hr. 47 mins.; NR) • Paris Theatre.

The Legend of Bagger Vance
Will Smith plays a spirit guide who arrives in Savannah, Georgia, to coax a fallen-on-hard-times former golf whiz, played by Matt Damon, into redemption. The film, which was directed by Robert Redford, is full of show-biz Zen about finding one's true, authentic swing in life; the mythic pastoralism gets awfully thick. Charlize Theron stars as a Southern belle with enough flounciness to make the Dallas dames in *Dr. T & the Women* seem cloistered by comparison. (Rainer; 11/6/00) (2 hrs.; PG) • Battery Park City Cinema; UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews New York Twin; Loews Orpheum 7; Sony Lincoln Square; Pavilion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Movies at Staten Island.

Lies
Korean filmmaker Jan Sun Woo presents this lurid sexual adventure (originally banned in Korea) about a married 38-year-old sculptor (Lee Sang Hyun) who ends up deflowering an 18-year-old student (Kim Tae Yeon) who eagerly wants to lose her virginity. (1 hr. 55 mins.; NR) • The Screening Room.

Little Nicky
Adam Sandler stars as the put-upon lovechild of Lucifer and an angel, trying to make his way in the world. (1 hr. 29 mins.; PG-13) • Battery Park City Cinema; UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea West; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews Orpheum 7; Loews 84th Street; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; New Coliseum; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.

The Little Vampire
A children's film about a prepubescent bloodsucker. Directed by Uli Edel. (1 hr. 32 mins.; G) • CO Worldwide Cinemas; Kew Gardens Cinemas.

Lucky Numbers
Nora Ephron's comedy stars John Travolta as a financially troubled TV weatherman who attempts to rig the state lottery with the help of the kooky lotto girl (Lisa Kudrow). (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) • CO Worldwide Cinemas.

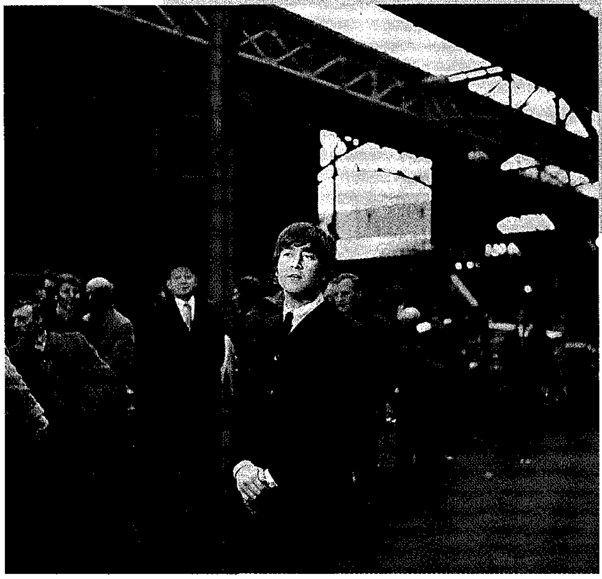
★ Meet the Parents
Lots of dumb jokes and misfires, but the rapport between Ben Stiller, playing a prospective son-in-law, and Robert De Niro, as the martinet father of his girlfriend, is rich. De Niro's character used to be a CIA operative, and he turns every conversation into a debriefing; Stiller has played this ardent-patsy role before but never as well; there's a whole vortex of calculation behind that wall-eyed stare of his. (Rainer; 10/9/00) (1 hr. 48 mins.; PG-13) • Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Metro Cinema; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Crossbay; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; Atrium; UA Movies at Staten Island; YWCA Cine-Club.

Men of Honor
Cuba Gooding Jr. stars as Carl Brashear, the real-life Navy diver who became the first African-American to break the color line; Robert De Niro is the cracker commander who tries to wreck Carl's ambitions and later becomes his gadfly ally. The film's testimonial-like tone doesn't make for an enlivening portrayal of heroism. Because of the racism he was opposing, Brashear's monomania to succeed in the Navy at all costs is depicted by the filmmakers as the height of valor. Whatever is disturbing or enraging about Brashear is sublimated to a bland highmindedness. (Rainer; 11/20/00) (2 hrs. 8 mins.; R) • Battery Park City Cinema; CC Village East; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's Chelsea West; Clearview's Ziegfeld; Clearview's Park and 86th St.; UA Gemini; Clearview's 62nd and Broadway; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Movies at Staten Island; YWCA Cine-Club.

Revival

Meet the Beatles Again

You might expect the publicist who handled the original release of Richard Lester's *A Hard Day's Night* to regale you with tales of being trampled by shrieking 12-year-old girls in pencil skirts. But **Jerry Pam**, the man who, 36 years ago, helped whip up the first wave of Beatlemania, is remarkably calm about the whole affair. "There was actually a lot more action on *Help!* than *A Hard Day's Night*," he says today in a suitably understated British accent. "When we had the initial screening of the film in Hollywood, only twelve people showed up. We knew we had to attract teenagers, and so we focused on getting airplay on a radio station called KRLA, which fast became known as the Beatles Station. After kids started tuning in, they all begged their parents to take them to the film. And then, of course, there was *The Ed Sullivan Show*." According to Pam, these were the ingredients that ended up creating Beatlemania—although he *did* witness one hard-core scene that foreshadowed the pandemonium that was to come: "You know that scene at the end of *Hard Day's* when they're filming the TV show? None of those kids are actors—they are real shrieking, squealing kids, ages 10 to 14. They ended up trampling hundreds and hundreds of seats." Does he think the scene will repeat itself now that a fully restored negative of *A Hard Day's Night* is about to screen at Film Forum? "Uh . . . no." Begins December 1. D.D.K.



Ground Rules

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by Peter Rainer. Stars (★) denote current releases that New York recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element. Reviews are followed by the names of theaters where the film is playing.

102 Dalmatians
Glenn Close reprises her role as the Dalmatian-hungry Cruella De Vil in this follow-up to the 1992 film. Also stars Gerard Depardieu. (1 hr. 41 mins.; G) • Battery Park City Cinema; CC Village East; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Loews 19th St. East; CC Sutton; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; New Coliseum; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; Canarsie; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Movies at Staten Island.

Pay It Forward
This heavy heaping of inspirationalism has the ungainliness of a political-party platform; child abuse, alcoholism, violence in the schools, and much more fill out this fable about a sad, spunky seventh-grader (Haley Joel Osment) who devises a way to make people pay on the favors they've received in life. Helen Hunt plays his mother; Kevin Spacey, his social-studies teacher. The film's slow-drawn deliberativeness is meant to clue us in that something weighty is going on, but most of this fable is second-rate sermonizing couched in psychobabble. (Rainer; 10/30/00) (1 hr. 40 mins.; PG-13) • The Screening Room; Sony Lincoln Square; Kew Gardens Cinemas; North Shore Towers.

★Quills
Philip Kaufman's movie about the Marquis de Sade, written by Doug Wright from his Obie-winning play, is a voluptuous impasto that mixes together angels and demons in a richly ambiguous swirl. Geoffrey Rush plays Sade, imprisoned in the Charenton Asylum for the Insane, and he's a degenerate fop who smuggles scurrilous screeds out into the world with the help of a chambermaid (a radiant Kate Winslet) and gets obliterated for his troubles. Michael Caine is the doctor-torturer who puts the screws to Sade; Joaquin Phoenix is the abbé at Charenton whose progressive ideas do not survive the riotous hypocrisies of the times. Kaufman soft pedals Sade's basest aspects, but there's tremendous verve and intelligence in his filmmaking, and in the performances he's elicited. (Rainer; 11/27/00) (2 hrs. 10 mins.; R) • CC Angelika Film Center; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.

Ratcatcher
A 12-year-old boy (William Eadie) in Glasgow, estranged from his troubled family, finds solace by play-

Previous page, top photograph courtesy of Promofest; bottom photograph courtesy of the Film Society of Lincoln Center.

ing with the debris in canals. He soon befriends a 14-year-old girl who wants to teach him a thing or two about love. (1 hr. 33 mins.; NR) • Cinema Village.

Red Planet
In Anthony Hoffman's directorial debut, Val Kilmer plays an astronaut stranded on Mars. (1 hr. 50 mins.; PG-13) • UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews Astor Plaza; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Loews Orpheum 7; Loews 84th Street; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; UA Marboro; Centre Sunnyside; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movies at Staten Island; YWCA Cine-Club.

Rugrats in Paris: The Movie
Those especially shrill animated children from the popular TV show shriek and bleat their way onto the big screen. (1 hr. 18 mins.; G) • Battery Park City Cinema; Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews New York Twin; UA East; Clearview's Metro Cinema; Loews 84th Street; New Coliseum; Nova; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island; YWCA Cine-Club.

Sing-a-long Sound of Music
A truly terrifying concept. Audience members clad in tacky curtains scream out all their faves from the classic 1965 musical. Starring Julie Andrews, Christopher Plummer, and numerous fanatics dressed as brown-paper parcels all tied up with string. (3 hrs.; G) • Clearview's Waverly.

The 6th Day
In the not-too-distant future, anything can be cloned—even Arnold Schwarzenegger, who plays a pilot faced with his double, the work of a nefarious DNA specialist. (1 hr. 43 mins.; R) • Battery Park City Cinema; UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Loews 84th Street; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Centre Sunnyside; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Movies at Staten Island.

The Tao of Steve
In Jenniphr Goodman's directorial debut, Donal Logue plays Dex, a way-overweight rogue who still manages to be lucky with the ladies despite his size-44 jeans. Greer Goodman plays Syd, the one woman who's seemingly insusceptible to his charms. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) • CO Worldwide Cinemas.

This Is Spinal Tap
Rob Reiner's classic satire of the heavy-metal scene, starring Michael McKean, Christopher Guest, and Harry Shearer. (1 hr. 22 mins.; R) • The Screening Room.

★ A Time for Drunken Horses
Iranian filmmaker Bahman Ghobadi has a wonderfu feeling for children's faces; he sees in them not merely an innocence but a preternatural maturity as well At times it's as if we are looking into these faces and seeing the whole life that will eventually be imprinted upon them. His movie is about the hardships of a band of brothers and sisters in the remote, mountainous regions of Kurdish Iran. (Rainer; 11/6/00) (1 hr 17 mins.; NR) • Cinema Village; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas

The Trench
Novelist William Boyd's first film as a director follows the two-day buildup to the Battle of the Somme in 1916. Starring Daniel Craig. (1 hr. 38 mins.; NR) • Film Forum.

★ Unbreakable
M. Night Shyamalan's follow-up to *The Sixth Sense* is almost as good—it has the same nocturnal sense of dread and a satisfyingly surprising ending. Bruce Willis plays a security guard who alone survives a massive trainwreck. Why? Samuel L. Jackson is a comic-book art collector named Elijah, as in the prophet, and his stare looks like it could burn a hole in Superman's Fortress of Solitude. (Rainer; 11/27/00) (1 hr. 47 mins.; PG-13) • Clearview's Waverly; UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Olympia; Loews 84th Street; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Canarsie; Cinemart; Jackson Triplex; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.

Venus Beauty Institute
A feisty beautician (Nathalie Baye) deals with her pressures at work with a bevy of one-night stands, until a passionate young man (Samuel Le Bihan) threatens to have her fall in love. (1 hr. 52 mins.; NR) • Quad Cinema; Clearview's 59th Street East.

The Weekend
Friends gather in an upstate–New York country house for the anniversary of an acquaintance's death. Soon enough, they start tearing one another's psyches apart. (1 hr. 16 mins; PG) • Quad Cinema.

What's Cooking?
Gurinder Chadha's film follows the dramatic exploits of four multigenerational L.A. families. Co-starring Mercedes Ruehl, Julianna Marguilies, and Kyra Sedgwick. (1 hr. 46 mins.; PG-13) • Quad Cinema; UA Gemini; BAM Rose Cinemas; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Kew Gardens Cinemas.

★ The Yards
James Gray's second feature, about corruption and family in the Mob scene in Queens, is mostly powerful, though it becomes overly familiar by the end. The cast is amazing: James Caan, Joaquin Phoenix, Mark Wahlberg, Faye Dunaway, Ellen Burstyn, Charlize Theron. They set up a force-field that keeps you watching. (Rainer; 10/30/00) (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) • CC Village East.

★ You Can Count On Me
Writer-director Kenneth Lonergen's wonderfully small-scale movie stars Mark Ruffalo and Laura Linney as reunited brother and sister, and theirs is one of the most convincing portrayals of family connection I've ever seen. They get all the feints and parries between siblings just right. It's a marvelous little movie that dispenses with much of the mushiness and grand revelations one might expect from this sort of material. Rory Culkin plays Linney's eight-year-old son and Matthew Broderick, in a sweetly cracked performance, is the boss she has an affair with. (Rainer; 11/13/00) (1 hr. 51 mins.; R) • CC Angelika Film Center; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Sony Lincoln Square; BAM Rose Cinemas; Kew Gardens Cinemas.

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

Battery Park City Cinema
102 North End Ave. (212-945-3418) • 102 Dalmatians;

Festivals

The Netherlands Ranch

A name like **Dutch Treats 2000: New Films From Holland** might lead you to expect ten full-length features about smoking marijuana in Amsterdam coffee shops. Unfortunately, there are none to be found throughout the weeklong festival, although the ten films being screened still piqued our interest. Highlights include Peter Delpeut's *Diva Dolorosa,* an intriguing documentary about three Italian silent-screen divas; Alex van Warmerdam's jet-black comedy *Little Tony,* which combines themes of power, possessiveness, and menage-à-trois into what some critics will undoubtedly call "a sexy soufflé"; and Robert Jan Westdijk's *Siberia,* the tale of two charming misfits who prey on Amsterdam's female tourists—and the Russian beauty who destroys them. Most intriguing of all, though, is the official Dutch entry for the Academy Awards, *Little Crumb,* Maria Peters' film about a rascally street tough (Rund Feltkamp, pictured) who's taken in by a kindhearted grocer. Not to worry: it's based on a *children's* book. Begins December 1 at Quad Cinema. (See "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Photograph courtesy of Holland Film Promotions.

Bounce; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; The Legend of Bagger Vance; Little Nicky; Men of Honor; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day.

CC Angelika Film Center
18 W. Houston St. (212-995-2000) • Billy Elliot; Quills; You Can Count On Me.

CC Village East
189 Second Ave. (212-529-6799) • 102 Dalmatians; Almost Famous; Best in Show; Men of Honor; The Yards.

Cinema Village
22 E. 12th St. (212-924-3363) • A Time for Drunken Horses; Animal Factory; Dark Days; Ratcatcher; Sasayaki.

Clearview's Waverly
323 Sixth Ave. (212-777-FILM#603) • Sing-a-long Sound of Music; Unbreakable.

Loews Village
56 Third Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#952) • Charlie's Angels; Meet the Parents; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; Wonder Boys.

Quad Cinema
34 W. 13th St. (212-255-8800) • The Broken Hearts Club; Venus Beauty Institute; The Weekend; What's Cooking?.

The Screening Room
54 Varick St. (212-334-2100) • George Washington; Lies; Pay It Forward; This Is Spinal Tap (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.").

UA Union Square
13th St. and Broadway (212-253-2225) • Bounce; Dancer in the Dark; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; The Legend of Bagger Vance; Little Nicky; Red Planet; Requiem for a Dream; The 6th Day; Unbreakable.

14th–41st Streets

CC Murray Hill Cinemas
160 E. 34th St. (212-689-6548) • 102 Dalmatians; Men of Honor.

Clearview's Chelsea
260 W. 23rd St. (212-777-FILM#597) • Bounce; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; The Legend of Bagger Vance; Red Planet; The 6th Day; Unbreakable.

Clearview's Chelsea West
333 W. 23rd St. (212-777-FILM#614) • Little Nicky; Men of Honor.

Loews 19th St. East
890 Broadway, at 19th St. (212-50-LOEWS#858) • 102 Dalmatians; Best in Show; Charlie's Angels; Meet the Parents; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie.

Loews Kips Bay Theatre
570 Second Ave. (212-505-6397#558) • Best in Show; Bounce; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; The Legend of Bagger Vance; Little Nicky; Meet the Parents; Red Planet; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day; Unbreakable.

42nd–60th Streets

CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3
1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (212-753-6022) • Billy Elliot; Little Nicky; Unbreakable.

CC Crown Gotham
969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (212-759-2262) • Bounce.

CC Sutton
205 E. 57th St. (212-759-1411) • 102 Dalmatians.

Clearview's 59th Street East
239 E. 59th St. (212-777-FILM#615) • Venus Beauty Institute.

Clearview's Ziegfeld
141 W. 54th St. (212-777-FILM#602) • Men of Honor.

CO Worldwide Cinemas
340 W. 50th St. (212-505-CINE#610) • Book of Shadows: Blair Witch 2; The Cell; The Exorcist: The Version You've Never Seen; The Ladies Man; The Little Vampire; Lucky Numbers; Nurse Betty; Scary Movie; The Tao of Steve; What Lies Beneath.

Loews 42nd Street E Walk
42nd Street at Eighth Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#572) • 102 Dalmatians; The Legend of Bagger Vance; Little Nicky; Meet the Parents; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day.

Loews Astor Plaza
44th St. bet. Broadway and Eighth Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#699) • Red Planet.

Loews Coronet
993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (212-505-CINE#608) • Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas.

Loews State
1540 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (212-50-LOEWS#901) • Best in Show; Dancer in the Dark; Girlfight; The Legend of Drunken Master.

Paris Theatre
4 W. 58th St. (212-688-3800) • La Bûche.

61st Street and Above, East Side

CC 86th St. East
210 E. 86th St. (212-777-FILM#763) • 102 Dalmatians; Best in Show; Bounce; The 6th Day.

Clearview's Beekman
1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (212-777-FILM#606) • The Contender.

Clearview's First & 62nd St.
400 E. 62nd St. (212-777-FILM#957) • Almost Famous; Meet the Parents; Red Planet; The 6th Day; You Can Count On Me.

Clearview's Park and 86th St.
125 E. 86th St. (212-777-FILM#604) • Men of Honor.

Loews 72nd St. East
1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (212-50-LOEWS#704) • Best in Show.

Loews New York Twin
1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (212-50-LOEWS#698) • The Legend of Bagger Vance; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie.

Loews Orpheum 7
1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (212-50-LOEWS#964) • Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; The Legend of Bagger Vance; Little Nicky; Meet the Parents; Red Planet; Unbreakable.

UA East
1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (212-249-5100) • Rugrats in Paris: The Movie.

UA Gemini
1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (212-832-1670) • Charlie's Angels; Men of Honor; What's Cooking?.

61st Street and Above, West Side

Clearview's 62nd and Broadway
1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (212-777-FILM#864) • Men of Honor.

Clearview's Metro Cinema
2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (212-777-FILM#609) • Meet the Parents; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie.

Clearview's Olympia
2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (212-777-FILM#613) • Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Unbreakable.

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas
30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (212-757-2280) • A Time for Drunken Horses; Dancer in the Dark; Kippur; Quills; Yi Yi.

Loews 84th Street
2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (212-50-LOEWS#701) • Little Nicky; Red Planet; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day; Unbreakable.

Magic Johnson Harlem USA
300 W. 125th St. (212-665-8733) • 102 Dalmatians; Bamboozled; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Little Nicky; Red Planet; The 6th Day; Unbreakable.

New Coliseum
701 W. 181st St. (212-740-1545) • 102 Dalmatians; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Little Nicky; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie.

Nova
3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (212-862-5728) • Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie.

Sony Lincoln Square
1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (212-50-LOEWS#638) • 102 Dalmatians; Best in Show; Billy Elliot; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; The Legend of Bagger Vance; Meet the Parents; Pay It Forward; Unbreakable; Wonder Boys; You Can Count On Me.

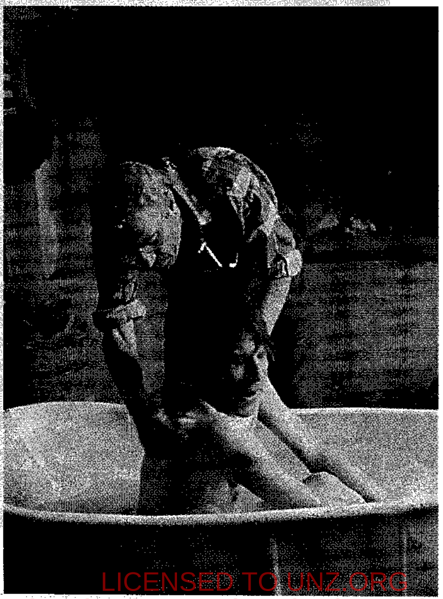
Bronx

Bay Plaza
2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (718-777-FILM#833) • 102 Dalmatians; Bounce; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Little Nicky; Meet the Parents; Men of Honor; Red Planet; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day; Unbreakable.

Premiere

Scientific Italian

Winner of the Special Jury Prize at the Berlin Film Festival, **Moon Shadow (Colpo di Luna)**, the first feature by writer-director Alberto Simone, stars celebrated Italian character actor Nino Manfredi (pictured, above, with Jim Van der Woude in tub) as Salvatore, the elderly worker for a scientist, Lorenzo (Tcheky Karyo). When Lorenzo inherits a decrepit old house in Sicily, he hires Salvatore and two young helpers to renovate it, and slowly but surely they all become enmeshed in the small therapeutic community surrounding them. Needless to say, life lessons are learned by all—particularly those relating to love, as Luisa (Isabelle Pasco), a talented young pianist, enters their lives and quickly develops a passion for Salvatore. If they start playing "Heart and Soul"—the scientist plinking first tentatively, then with abandon—that's your cue to put your arm around your date. Begins December 1 at Cinema Village.



Photograph courtesy of Promofest.

Concourse Plaza
214 E. 161th St. (718-588-8800) • 102 Dalmatians; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Little Nicky; Red Planet; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day; Unbreakable.

Whitestone
2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (718-409-9030) • 102 Dalmatians; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Little Nicky; Meet the Parents; Men of Honor; Red Planet; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day; Unbreakable.

Brooklyn

BAM Rose Cinemas
30 Lafayette Ave. (718-623-2770) • Billy Elliot; What's Cooking?; You Can Count On Me. (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Brooklyn Heights
70 Henry St. (718-596-7070) • Call theater for showtimes.

Canarsie
9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (718-718-251-0700) • 102 Dalmatians; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Unbreakable.

Clearview's Cobble Hill
265 Court St. (718-596-9113) • Almost Famous; Dancer in the Dark; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Red Planet; What's Cooking?.

CO Alpine
6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (718-777-FILM#580) • Call theater for showtimes.

CO Fortway
6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (718-777-FILM#578) • Call theater for showtimes.

CO Kings Plaza
5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (718-777-FILM#579) • Call theater for showtimes.

CO Kingsway
946 Kings Hwy., at Coney Island Ave. (718-777-FILM#577) • Call theater for showtimes.

Kent Triplex
Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (718-338-3371) • 102 Dalmatians; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Unbreakable.

Revival

Factory Product

The Chelsea Girls has long been heralded as Andy Warhol's best film, which is akin to calling chicken pox one of the most pleasant diseases to have. Nevertheless, the 1966 series of vignettes offers enough footage of smack-addled zombies lackadaisically engaging in homosexual love to appease even the most morose high-schooler. Notorious broken people like Edie Sedgwick, Mary Woronov, and Mario Montez fill out the cast—but Nico (pictured, with Gerard Malanga) could well be the star attraction, not least of all for the inclusion of her folksy single "Chelsea Girls," which includes the immortal chorus: "Here they come now/ See them run now/ Chelsea Girls." Screens December 2 at the American Museum of the Moving Image as part of "Visions of New York: Films from the 1960's Underground."

Photograph courtesy of the Musuem of the Moving Image.

Linden Boulevard Multiplex
Linden Blvd. and Eldert Lane (718-718-277-0303) • 102 Dalmatians; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Little Nicky; Meet the Parents; Men of Honor; Red Planet; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day; Unbreakable.

Pavilion
188 Prospect Park West (718-369-0838) • 102 Dalmatians; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; The Legend of Bagger Vance; Little Nicky; Men of Honor; Red Planet; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day; Unbreakable.

Ridgewood
55-27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (718-821-5993) • 102 Dalmatians; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; Unbreakable.

UA Marboro
6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (718-232-4000) • 102 Dalmatians; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Meet the Parents; Red Planet; Unbreakable.

UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay
3907 Shore Pkwy, off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (718-615-1700) • Bounce; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; The Legend of Bagger Vance; Little Nicky; Meet the Parents; Men of Honor; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; Unbreakable.

Queens

Centre Sunnyside
42-17 Queens Blvd. (718-361-6869) • 102 Dalmatians; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Little Nicky; Red Planet; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day.

Cinemart
106-03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (718-261-2244) • 102 Dalmatians; Little Nicky; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; Unbreakable.

CO Cinema City
183-15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (718-777-FILM#592) • Call theater for showtimes.

CO Fresh Meadows
Eastbound Service Rd. at 190th St. (718-777-FILM#619) • Call theater for showtimes.

College Point Multiplex
28-55 Ulmer St., Whitestone (718-886-4900) • 102 Dalmatians; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Little Nicky; Meet the Parents; Red Planet; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day; Unbreakable.

Jackson Triplex
82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (718-478-6777) • Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; Unbreakable.

Kaufman Astoria Cinema
38th St. at 35th Ave. (718-786-2020) • Bedazzled; Bounce; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; The Legend of Bagger Vance; Little Nicky; Meet the Parents; The 6th Day; Unbreakable.

Kew Gardens Cinemas
81-05 Lefferts Blvd. (718-441-9835) • Best in Show The Little Vampire; Pay It Forward; Requiem for a Dream What's Cooking?; Yi Yi; You Can Count On Me.

Main Street Cinemas
72-66 Main St. (718-263-4828) • 102 Dalmatians; Char lie's Angels; Digimon: The Movie; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinc Stole Christmas; Little Nicky; Men of Honor; Rugrats i Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day; Unbreakable.

North Shore Towers
27-10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (718-229 7702) • Best in Show; Girl on the Bridge; Kippur; Pay I Forward.

Plaza
103–14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (718 639-0012) • 102 Dalmatians; Rugrats in Paris: Th Movie.

Sony Bay Terrace
211-01 26th Ave., at Bell Blvd., Bayside (718-777 FILM#712) • Call theater for showtimes.

Sony Elmwood
57-02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (718-777-FILM#733 • Call theater for showtimes.

UA Astoria
28-60 Steinway St. (718-726-1279) • 102 Dalmatians Charlie's Angels; Men of Honor; Red Planet; Rugrats i Paris: The Movie.

UA Brandon Cinema
70-20 Austin St., Forest Hills (718-544-1020) • The Legend of Bagger Vance; Red Planet; The 6th Day.

UA Crossbay
94-11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (718-848-1738) • Meet the Parents; Red Planet; The 6th Day; Unbreakable.

UA Crossbay II
92-10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (718-641-5330) • 102 Dalmatians; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Little Nicky; Meet the Parents; Men of Honor; Red Planet; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day.

UA Midway
108-22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (718-544-5545) • Billy Elliot; Bounce; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Meet the Parents; Men of Honor.

UA Movies at Bayside
38-39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (718-225-7711) • Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Meet the Parents; Men of Honor; Red Planet; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie.

UA Movieworld
242-02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (718-423-7200) • 102 Dalmatians; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Little Nicky; Men of Honor; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day.

Staten Island

Atrium
680 Arthur Kill Rd., nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (718-317-8300) • 102 Dalmatians; Bounce; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Meet the Parents; Men of Honor; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day.

UA Hylan Plaza
107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (718-351-0805) • Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Little Nicky; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; Unbreakable.

UA Movies at Staten Island
141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (718-983-9600) • 102 Dalmatians; Bounce; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; The Legend of Bagger Vance; Little Nicky; Meet the Parents; Men of Honor; Red Planet; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day; Unbreakable.

Museums, Societies, Etc.

American Museum of the Moving Image
36-01 35th Ave., Astoria, Queens (718-784-0077). Tickets, $4.50–$8.50. Members and children under four, free. • Through 12/3: "Visions of New York: Films from the 1960's Underground." 12/2: *The Chelsea Girls* (1966). 12/3: *Warhol's EPI* (1966); *The Soap Opera* (1964); *Joan of Arc* (1967); *Chumlum* (1964); *Straight and Narrow* (1970); *Outer and Inner Space* (1965). Through 12/30: "Repertory Nights." 12/2–12/3: *Ugetsu* (1953); *Wings of Desire* (1987).

Anthology Film Archives
32 Second Ave. (212-505-5110); $8. • Beginning 12/1: "Troma Retrospective: 25 Years of Excellence in Celluloid." 12/1: *The Toxic Avenger* (1984); *Terror Firmer* (1999). 12/2: *Cannibal! The Musical* (1996); *Squeeze Play* (1979); *Waitress!* (1981); *Terror Firmer*; *Bloodsucking Freaks* (1975); *Vegas in Space* (1991). 12/3: *The First Turn-on!!* (1983); *Stuck on You!* (1982). 12/4: *Terror Firmer*; *Class of Nuke 'Em High* (1986).

Asia Society
502 Park Ave., at 59th St. (212-517-ASIA; www.asiasociety.org); $10, $7 members. • 11/28: *Fatal Reaction: Bombay* (1998).

BAM Rose Cinemas
30 Lafayette Avenue, Brooklyn (718-623-2770). • 11/28: "Remembering John Gielgud." *Arthur* (1982). 11/29: "Sounds of Silents." *Forbidden Paradise* (1924). 11/30–12/3: "Everyday Courage: Czech Film From Machaty to the 60s." 11/30: *Long Live the Republic* (1965). 12/1: *All My Good Countrymen* (1968). 12/2: *Intimate Lighting* (1965), with a Q&A session with Ivan Passer; *End of a Priest* (1968). 12/3: *The Joke* (1969); *Black Peter* (1963), with a Q&A session with Milos Forman. 12/4: "Resnais Retrospective." *My American Uncle* (1980).

Brooklyn Museum of Art
200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000, ext. 372; www.brooklynart.org); free. • 12/2: *Carpati* (1996). 12/3: *Microcosmos* (1996).

Film Society of Lincoln Center
(The Walter Reade Theater) 65 W. 65th St., plaza level (212-875-5600); $8.50, $5 for members, $4.50 for seniors, $4 for "Movies for Kids." • Through 11/30: "Revolution in the Revolution: Soviet Cinema of the 60s." 11/28: *Debut* (1970); *Goodbye, Boys* (1964). 11/29: *Trial on the Road* (1971); *Debut*. 11/30: *No Ford in the Fire* (1967); *Trial on the Road*; *Sayat Nova* (1969). 12/1–12/7: "American Independent Visions." *A Good Baby* (1999).

Guggenheim Museum
1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. (212-423-3587 or boxoffice@guggenheim.org; 212-360-4312 for more information). Tickets $10 ($7 members, seniors, and students). • Beginning 12/1: "Fever in the Archive: AIDS Activist Videotapes From the Royal S. Marks Collection." 12/1: *Testing the Limits* (1987); *All People With AIDS Are Innocent* (1990); *We Care: A Video for Care Providers of People Affected by AIDS* (1990); Kissing Doesn't Kill (1990); Target City Hall (1989). 12/2: "Speak for Yourself." GMHC Oral History Project (1989–1993); ACT-UP sections from *Voices on the Front* (1992).

Quad Cinema
34 W. 13th St. (212-255-8800). • Beginning 12/1: "Dutch Treats 2000: New Films from Holland." 12/1: *Crazy* (1999); *Diva Dolorosa* (1999); *Leak* (2000); *Les Diseurs de Vérité* (2000); *Little Crumb* (1999). 12/2: *Crazy*. 12/3: *Diva Dolorosa*; *Little Crumb*; *Les Diseurs de Vérité*.

Museum of Modern Art
11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480); free with $10 admission, $6.50 for students and seniors, no admission fee for children 16 and under when accompanied by an adult. • 12/1: *The Beast With Five Fingers* (1946); *En El Viejo Tampico (Gran Casino)* (1946); *Lick My Decals Off, Baby* (1970); *The Rays* (1970); *Land of 1000 Dances* (1976). 12/2: *El Gran Calavera (The Great Madcap)* (1949); *France/Tour/Détour/Deux/Enfants* (1977–1978). 12/3: *France/Tour/Détour/Deux/Enfants*. 12/4: *El Gran Calavera (The Great Madcap)*; *Warrendale* (1967); *Grand Mal* (1981); *Savage/Love* (1981); *Pickelporno* (1992).

Trailers

A BRONX TALE The Bigel/Mailer film *Empire*, starring **John Leguizamo**, **Denise Richards**, and **Isabella Rossellini**, is wrapping up shooting all over Manhattan this month, with director **Franc Reyes**. The story follows a young Latino hustler (Leguizamo) who gets a taste of the moneyed life from a high-class Manhattan player, estranging himself from his girlfriend and his roots in the meantime. Grammy-winner **Rubén Blades** is composing the score.

LOVE AND ROCKETS **Sarah Jessica Parker** will be practicing sex in other cities this winter. In *Life Without Dick*, about to go into production in Los Angeles, she plays a woman who falls for a hit man (**Harry Connick Jr.**). Though he'd rather be crooning than killing, she hires him to off her husband (the Dick of the title). The Columbia Pictures production will be directed by **Bix Skahill**.

MIDTOWN MAYHEM **William Baldwin**, **Armand Assante**, and **Chazz Palminteri** are coming to town this winter to finish shooting *One Eyed King;* though the Lion's Gate production was filmed mostly in Canada, the actors will be shooting final scenes in Manhattan in February. **Robert Moresco** directs the film, his first, about the tensions between Hell's Kitchen wiseguys and their friends from the neighborhood-turned-NYPD cops.

EARNEST EFFORTS **Rupert Everett** and **Judi Dench** (of *Mrs. Brown* and *Elizabeth* fame) are confirmed to star in **Oliver Parker**'s Miramax film of Oscar Wilde's punny critique of nineteenth-century British high society, *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Parker will also write the screenplay adaptation, to be produced by **Barnaby Thompson** and **Uri Fruchtmann** (*An Ideal Husband*). SARA CARDACE

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cue

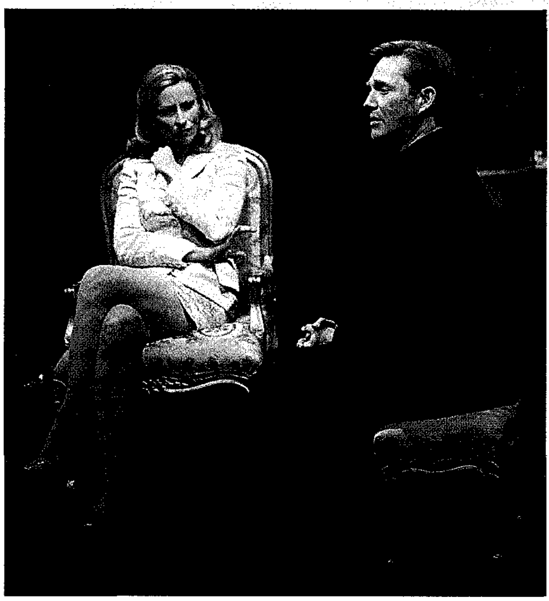
Theater

Edited by Logan Hill

Previews

Alice Unchained

As Edward Albee gears up for the January production of his new drama, *The Play About the Baby,* Second Stage is reviving **Tiny Alice** (featuring Laila Robins and Richard Thomas, pictured), his confounding mystery about the richest woman in the world. The first play Albee completed after the success of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *Tiny Alice* was slammed by critics, who found it a baffling, pretentious mess. However, the play's brash experimentation has earned it a few fans since John Gielgud starred in its debut 36 years ago, including Mark Lamos, who will stage the play's first New York revival. In previews for a December 5 opening. (See "Off Broadway.")



Broadway

Previews and Openings

Jane Eyre
Few shows boast a production team with this pedigree, starting with John Caird (*Les Misérables, Nicholas Nickleby,* both with Trevor Nunn), who adapted and staged (with Scott Schwartz) the Charlotte Brontë novel, and designer John Napier (*Cats, Les Miz*), along with costume designer Andreane Neofitou. This musical, with a score by pop composer Paul Gordon, received very mixed reviews at the La Jolla Playhouse—but broke box-office records. $50–$86. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 12/3 opening. • Brooks Atkinson Theatre, 256 W. 47th St. (212-307-4100).

Seussical
Barring the Broadway arrival of *Harry Potter Sings!,* Dr. Seuss may be the only children's brand with enough star power to battle Disney's troika of *The Lion King, Aida,* and *Beauty and the Beast.* But with high-camp appeal, there's no doubt this musical, by Lynn Ahrens and Steven Flaherty, will yank in more than just the kiddies. $25–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for an 11/30 opening. $25–$85. • Richard Rodgers Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. (212-307-4100).

Now Playing

Aida
The epic musical about the love affair between a Nubian slave and a cute Egyptian. $25–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Palace Theatre, 1554 Broadway, at 47th St. (212-307-4747).

Annie Get Your Gun
Cheryl Ladd plays Annie Oakley, the sharp-tongued, sharpshootin' gal from Cincinnati who eclipses her lover, Frank Butler (played by Patrick Cassidy), in Buffalo Bill's traveling Wild West Show. Irving Berlin did the lyrics and score; Peter Stone updated the book. $35–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Marquis Theatre, 1535 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (212-307-4100).

Beauty and the Beast
Disney's beast is back. $25–$85. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. • Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (212-307-4747).

Betrayal
Director David Leveaux (last season's powerful revival of Tom Stoppard's *The Real Thing*) directs Juliette Binoche, Liev Schreiber, and John Slattery in Harold Pinter's intricate tale of love, lust, and the pain of adultery. $40–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. • American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. (212-719-1300).

Ground Rules

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where discount tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.

Cabaret
The Roundabout is to be roundly applauded for recreating Sam Mendes's 1993 London production, even if with some diminishment. Shortcomings notwithstanding, this revival has enough to satisfy all but the most fastidious. (Simon: 3/30/98.) Now starring Matt McGrath (*Hedwig*) and Lea Thompson. $25–$90. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. • Studio 54, 254 W. 54th St. (212-239-6200).

Chicago
It was a gamble to transfer the Encores! production of this musical to Broadway, but since it's about women who kill their men and the mercenary lawyer who gets them off, gambling seems like the merest peccadillo. Every bosom, pelvis, and long leg is in business to keep the women in the audience identifying, the men panting. (Simon: 11/30/98.) $20–$85. Mon., Tues., Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. • Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

Contact
This is billed as "a dance play by Susan Stroman and John Weidman," with what little there is of a play mostly by Weidman and the variety and plenitude of the dancing all Stroman. Its two shorter pieces and concluding longer one are of uneven merit but never without interest. Deborah Yates triumphs as the girl in yellow. (Simon: 10/25/99.) $55–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).

Copenhagen
A major hit in London, Michael Frayn's heady play about what might have happened when German physicist Werner Heisenberg visited Niels Bohr in 1941 stars Philip Bosco, Blair Brown, and Michael Cumpsty. $40–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Royale Theatre, 242 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

The Dinner Party
Neil Simon's unabashedly contrived new comedy features three men, two of their ex-wives, and a mysterious man who has locked them all in a Paris dining room together. Henry Winkler and John Ritter star. $20–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Music Box Theater, 239 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Dirty Blonde
Brash actress-author Claudia Shear stars in her delightful play about two Gotham singles who meet at the grave of Mae West, sampling delicious vignettes from the life of the woman who said, "I'm no angel, but I've spread my wings a bit." $55–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Wed. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Helen Hayes Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

Fosse
A tribute to the late choreographer-director. $65–$80. Mon., Tues., and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2 and 7, Sat. at 2. • Broadhurst Theatre, 235 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

The Full Monty
The musical adaptation of the 1997 film about desperate, destitute men who have nothing to lose but their underwear. Music and lyrics by David Yazbek; book by Terrence McNally; directed by Jack O'Brien. $31–$86. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. • Eugene O'Neill Theatre, 230 W. 49th St. (212-239-6200).

Gore Vidal's The Best Man
Chris Noth and Spalding Gray play opposing presidential candidates in Gore Vidal's drama, joined by Elizabeth Ashley, Charles Durning, Christine Ebersole, Jonathan Hadary, and Michael Learned. $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (212-239-6200).

Jekyll & Hyde
Man turns into beastly man, all in the name of science. Now starring David Hasselhoff. $45–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 1/7. • Plymouth Theatre, 236 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Kiss Me, Kate
With a score jammed with some of the best-known theater songs ever written, it's no wonder each generation has rediscovered this gem since its 1948 Broadway premiere. Now Brian Stokes Mitchell and Marin Mazzie interpret Cole Porter's feuding couple. $25–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Photograph by T. Charles Erickson.

Les Misérables
What a story! Just synopsizing the plot brings tears to the iciest of eyes. (Simon: 3/31/97.) $20–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

The Lion King
This spectacle rightfully earns that most abused of epithets: *magical.* (Simon: 12/1/97.) $20–$90. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. • New Amsterdam Theater, 214 W. 42nd St. (212-307-4747).

Miss Saigon
A big helicopter stars in this adaptation of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly.* $20–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Through 1/28. • Broadway Theater, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. (212-239-6200).

The Music Man
Back in 1957, Meredith Willson's *The Music Man* made a star out of Robert Preston; the current revival should do the same for Rebecca Luker. As she has steadily demonstrated, she is blessed with the voice, the looks, and the acting talent of a musical-comedy diva. (Simon: 5/8/00.) $40–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd. St. (212-307-4100).

The Phantom of the Opera
Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster continues to pack them in. $20–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. • Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

Proof
David Auburn's *Proof* is what *Copenhagen* ought to be: a play about scientists whose science matters less than their humanity. Here, those of us who want their dramatic characters to be real people need not feel excluded. Robert, a world-famous mathematician who went crazy; Catherine, his mathematically brilliant but too-depressed-to-work daughter; Hal, a young math teacher going through Robert's hundred-plus confused notebooks; and Claire, Robert's older daughter and a successful actuary, are above all fascinating individuals. As directed by Daniel Sullivan, the performances are perfect. As for Mary-Louise Parker, her Catherine is a performance of genius. (Simon: 6/5/00.) $24–$69. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Walter Kerr Theatre, 219 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).

Rent
The late Jonathan Larson's reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème.* $35–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. • Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (212-307-4100).

Riverdance
The Irish return. $25–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Gershwin Theatre, 222 W. 51st St. (212-307-4100).

The Rocky Horror Show
Christopher Ashley (*Jeffrey*) directs a surreal cast in Frank N. Furter's pad. Lifelong rocker Joan Jett makes her Broadway debut opposite *Rent* star Daphne Rubin-Vega, stage vet Tom Hewitt, comics Dick Cavett and Lea De Laria, and Alice Ripley of *Side Show* (very appropriate). $75. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9:45, Sun. at 2 and 7. • Circle in the Square, 1633 Broadway (212-239-6200).

Saturday Night Fever
Flared pants! $35–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. Through 12/30. • Minskoff Theatre, 200 W. 45th St. (212-307-4100).

The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe
Lily Tomlin returns, along with an astonishing assortment of characters led by Trudy, a homeless lady and "creative consultant to these aliens from outer space" who knows that reality is really just "a collective hunch." The solo show that makes other solo shows look like, well, solo shows, it's written and directed by Jane Wagner. $50–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Booth Theatre, 222 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Swing!
The dance marathon continues. $20–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • St. James Theatre, 246 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

The Tale of the Allergist's Wife
Who would have expected from a campy downtown playwright a nicely structured, intelligently funny, satirically relevant uptown comedy? In Charles Busch's new play, the retired but still overactive allergist Dr. Ira Taub is married to Marjorie, an immobilized nervous wreck since the death of her therapist. If you seek an ideal cast, look no further. Linda Lavin, for whom the admiring Busch wrote Marjorie as, he says, a kind of King Lear, is that and more. (Simon: 3/13/00.) Also starring Tony Roberts and Michele Lee. $30–$70. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. • Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St. (212-239-6200).

Off Broadway

Previews and Openings

The Bitter Tears of Petra Von Kant
A new adaptation of the Werner Fassbinder film about a lesbian affair between a fashion designer and a young model. $42. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. Previews begin 11/30 for a 12/11 opening. • Henry Miller's Theatre, 124 W. 43rd St. (212-279-4200).

A Christmas Carol
Madison Square Garden welcomes back its annual holiday extravaganza, directed by Susan Stroman and starring Frank Langella as Scrooge. $29–$65. Call for schedule. Through 12/31. • Madison Square Garden, Seventh Ave. at 32nd St. (212-307-7171).

Circus Oz
Kid-friendly Australian mayhem, featuring tightrope walkers, jugglers, trapezists, and more. $10–$35. Call for schedule. 12/1–1/14. • New Victory Theater, 209 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

A Dream Play
Strindberg's surrealist splash, directed by Robert Wilson. $20–$55. 11/28–12/2 at 7:30, 12/3 at 3. • BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-636-4100).

Fermat's Last Tango
A comic musical about mathematicians. $45–$50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. In previews for a 12/6 opening. Through 12/31. • Theatre at Saint Peter's Church, 619 Lexington Ave., at 54th St. (212-239-6200).

The House of Bernarda Alba
A new production of Federico Garcia Lorca's all-female drama, adapted and directed by Chay Yew.

Opening

Dream a Little Dream

"I'm a bricklayer, and I'm making bricks," explains **Robert Wilson**, his phrasing at once as abstract and spare as his distinctive staging. "I'm a carpenter, and I pick up a hammer and I put a nail in a board." Simple, discrete images like these are what the artist describes as the "concrete" foundation for his adaptation of August Strindberg's 1901 *A Dream Play* (pictured), a nonlinear Surrealist splash in which a goddess steps down to earth. Critics of early performances overseas said that this first meeting was inevitable: "Strindberg had, of course, been waiting for Wilson," one reviewer noted dryly, "for almost a century." But Wilson—best known for such stage spectacles as *Einstein on the Beach*, not to mention the Armani exhibit at the Guggenheim—wanted to shake things up. "My first thought," says the visionary director, from a Copenhagen rehearsal studio where he's collaborating on a musical adaptation of *Woyzeck* with Tom Waits, "was that, since my work is very nonnaturalistic, and because this play is a dream, I would, for once in my life, try to do something that would be *very* naturalistic and that would make it even more strange. Well," he adds, "that didn't exactly work out." Still, despite large plaster cows, thirteen tableaux, dramatic monochromatic washes of blue or red, and more than 400 sound cues, he insists that simple gestures dominate his production. "Theater often becomes too complicated," says Wilson. "The theater has to be about one thing first, and then it can be about a million things. Theater needs to be accessible on the surface—to be superficial. Beneath that, you can have something else, but the mystery is always in the surface." (See "Off Broadway.") L.H.

Photograph by Lesley Leslie Spinks.

$12–$19. Mon.–Fri. at 7, Sat. at 2 and 7. Previews begin 12/1 for a 12/6 opening. Through 12/23. • Intar Theatre, 508 W. 53rd St. (718-623-1672).

Jesus Hopped the A Train

After a successful run at the LAByrinth Theater, this new play by Stephen Adly Guirgis (*In Arabia, We'd All Be Kings*) transfers for an Off Broadway stint. In its first production, John Ortiz (pictured), the talented cofounder of the LAByrinth Theater, gave a mesmerizing, intense performance as Angel Cruz, a Rikers Island prisoner who confronts a religious fanatic (Ron Cephas Jones) behind bars. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 7, Fri and Sat. at 10, Sun. at 3. In previews for an 11/29 opening. • East 13th Street Theatre, 136 E. 13th St. (212-239-6200).

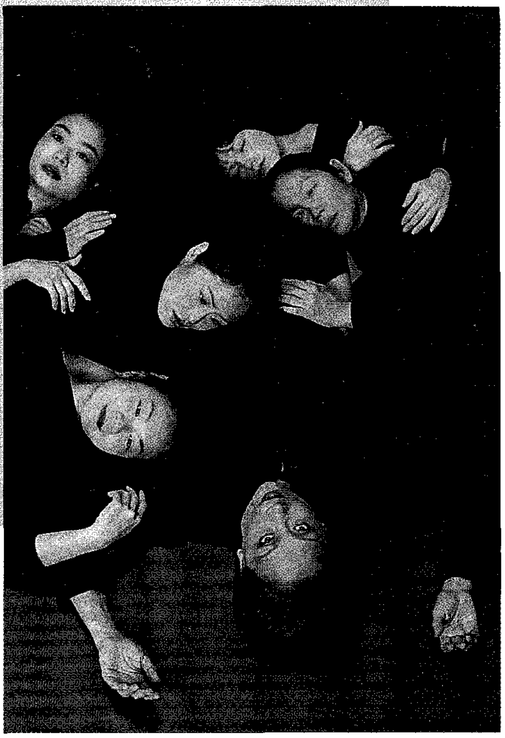
The Last of the Thorntons

Pulitzer and Academy award-winning playwright Horton Foote revisits his often-visited fictional hometown, Harrison, to tell the tale of the last surviving member of the Thornton clan. $47.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 12/3 opening. Through 12/30. • Signature Theatre's Peter Norton Space, 555 W. 42nd St. (212-244-7529).

Previews

You Gotta Represent

"Everyone used to tell me, *If you want to act, you'd better make sure you know how to sing and dance so you can be in the chorus of* Miss Saigon," says Mia Katigbak. She co-founded the **National Asian American Theatre Company** in 1989, because "I knew a lot of actors and actresses who couldn't figure out why producers just wanted to cast Suzie Wongs and '*hot fings*.' When I'd go out for auditions and my pieces were from *Glass Menagerie* or Oscar Wilde, people would just look at me cross-eyed." Her company produces all-Asian productions of classic works that Asian-American actors might otherwise never get the chance to perform. Next up, beginning December 1, is a new adaptation of Federico García Lorca's all-female drama *The House of Bernarda Alba* (cast pictured), written and directed by Chay Yew. "Yeah, people say you can't have a white Gertrude and an Asian Hamlet because it's not realistic, but, hey, things are changing," Katigbak cheekily observes. "I live in Park Slope, and I see white people with Asian kids all the time." (See "Off Broadway.") L.H.



Photograph by Carol Rosegg.

Pete 'n' Keely

A new musical comedy by James Hindman imagines a 1968 television special starring "America's Swinging Sweethearts," played by Sally Mayes and George Dvorsky. Mark Waldrop directs; Bob Mackie designed the costumes. $35–$55. Tues–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 12/1 for a 12/14 opening. • John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

Princess Turandot

A prince and a princess meet and fall in love in Darko Tresnjak's new play, which mixes vaudeville, performance art, music, and more. $37.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8. Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 11/28 for a 12/7 opening. • McGinn/Cazale Theater, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (212-279-4200).

Saved or Destroyed

Playwright Craig Lucas (*Stranger, Prelude to a Kiss*) makes his directorial debut, helming Harry Kondoleon's never-produced comedy about an acting troupe. $35. In previews for an 11/30 opening. Through 12/3. • Rattlestick Theatre, 224 Waverly Pl. (212-206-1515).

Tiny Alice

Edward Albee's perversely strange mystery. $40–$50. Tues., Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2 and 7, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 12/5 opening. Through 12/24. • Second Stage Theatre, 307 W. 43rd St. (212-246-4422).

Now Playing

Alice in Bed

Avant-garde darling Ivo van Hove directs Joan MacIntosh and Jorre Vandenbussche in Susan Sontag's drama. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 3 and 7. Through 12/9. • New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. (212-460-5475).

American Rhapsody

A new musical revue of Gershwin's works. $40–$55. Wed.–Fri. at 8, Thurs. at 2, Sat. at 5 and 10:15, Sun. at 2. Through 12/31. • Triad Theatre, 158 W. 72nd St. (212-239-6200).

Auto-Trains, Fire Ants, and Lesbians

Jeremy Dobrish directs Michael Garin's new one-act. $30. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 10. Through 12/2. • Flatiron Theater, 119 W. 23rd St. (212-279-4200).

Baal

This bop-era adaptation, featuring a new translation by Peter Mellencamp, reopens after a successful late-night run earlier this year. $15–$25. Wed.–Sat. at 10, Wed. at 8, Sat. at midnight. Through 12/16. • Flea, 41 White St. (212-226-2407).

Berlin to Broadway with Kurt Weill

A new revue directed by Hal Simons. $45. Mon., Tues., Fri., Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7:30, Wed. at 3, Sat. and Sun. at 4:30. Through 12/24. • Triad Theatre, 158 W. 72nd St. (212-239-6200).

Blue Man Group: Tubes

Smart silliness. $45–$55. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. at and 10, Sat. at 4, 7, and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. • Astor Plac Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (212-254-4370).

Book of the Dead (Second Avenue)

John Moran's new multimedia musical takes audienc members on a "theme park ride" through the world' regions and religions. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun at 2, Sun. at 7. • The Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St (212-239-6200).

Boys Don't Wear Lipstick

In this solo show, Brian Belovitch recalls his atypica life. $20–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 5, Sun. at 3 and 7. • Players Theatre, 115 Macdougal St. (212-239-6200).

Cary and Gallo: What If We Did This?

Ted Sullivan directs the comic duo Cary and Gallo, in a production written by several late-night-television writers. $30. Mon. at 8. Through 1/22. • SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (212-239-6200).

Charles Bukowski's South of No North

The 29th Street Rep revives its successful spring adaptation of stories by the literary pubcrawler. $35. Wed.–Mon. at 8. Through 12/7. • 29th Street Rep Theatre, 212 W. 29th St. (212-465-1714).

Class Act

This is a cute little musical that Linda Kline and Lonny Price have contrived from the songs of the late Edward Kleban, who wrote the lyrics for *A Chorus Line.* The songs, though seldom outstanding, are enjoyable, and the cast is solid. (Simon: 11/20/00.) $40. Tues.–Sun. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 12/3. • City Center Theatre, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212).

Cobb

Lee Blessing's play about the baseball icon transfers to Off Broadway. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8:30, Sun. at 7:30, Sun. at 3:30. • Lucille Lortel Theatre, 121 Christopher St. (212-239-6200).

Comic Potential

When Alan Ayckbourn's new comedy wowed London last year, actress Janie Dee took home the Olivier, Evening Standard, and Critics Circle awards. She'll arrive at the MTC to play Jacie Triple Three, a robotic actoid hired by a struggling screenwriter in Ayckbourn's farcical future. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 2:30 and 7. • MTC Stage 1 at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212).

The Countess

Gregory Murphy's costume drama about the love triangle of John Ruskin, his wife, and painter John Everett Millais. $40–$55. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30. • Lambs Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

Crave

Deborah Harry stars in this Axis Company production of London playwright Sarah Kane's disjointed drama. $25. Wed.–Sat. at 8. Through 12/23. • Axis Theatre, 1 Sheridan Sq. (212-807-9300).

De La Guarda

A show that's part carnival, part rock concert, and almost entirely airborne. $37.50–$45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Fri. at 10:30, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. • Daryl Roth Theatre, 20 Union Square East, at 15th St. (212-239-6200).

Dinner With Friends

Karen and Gabe, international food writers, are giving a dinner for their friends Beth and Tom, which Tom doesn't attend. It emerges from the heartbroken Beth that her husband has left her for another woman. There is skillful construction here, as well as keen psychological insight. (Simon: 11/22/99.) $30–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3, Sun. at 7:30. • Variety Arts Theatre, 110 Third Ave. (212-239-6200).

The Donkey Show

A fantastic, loose disco-musical adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* with even looser morals. $39. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 10:30. • El Flamingo, 547 W. 21st St. (212-307-4100).

Down the Garden Paths

Anne Meara's new comedy about four couples stars Eli Wallach and Anne Jackson. $60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 3. Through 1/28. • Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Ln. (212-307-4100).

nd of the World Party
new comedy about gay men who share a Fire Island ummer house by multiple Emmy winner Chuck angberg. $45. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at • 47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. (212-239-6200).

he Fantasticks
he musical perennial. $36.50–$39. Tues.–Fri. at 8, at. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. • Sullivan St. Playouse, 181 Sullivan St. (212-674-3838).

orbidden Broadway 2001: A Spoof Odyssey
erard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof. $49.50. Mon. and Wed.–Sat. at :15, Sat at 2:30, Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30. Food and rink available, optional. • Stardust Theatre, Broadway at 1st St. (212-239-6200).

Guys Named José . . . and Una Mujer Named aria
our Latino guys fight to put together a song-and-ance revue. $37.50–$47.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. and at. at 3, Sun. at 7:30. • Blue Angel Theatre, 323 W. 44th t. (212-239-6200).

ully Committed
martly directed by Nicholas Martin, this play is a day n the life of Sam, the young man and struggling actor who works the reservation phones in a four-star estaurant where table 31 seems to be the ne plus ultra of socio-gastronomic achievement. (Simon: /17/00.) Now starring the wonderful Roger Bart. 45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. • herry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. (212-239-6200).

Game Show
Director Mark Waldrop's cast will imulate a live TV broadcast and elect audience members to compete for cash and prizes. $49.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3 and 7. Through 12/23. • 45 Bleecker Theatre, 45 Bleecker St. (212-307-4100).

The Gorey Details
A new musical revue based on the spooky stories of Edward Gorey. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. • Century Center, 111 E. 15 St. (212-239-6200).

Green Fields
Zypora Spaisman and Shifra Lerer star in the Yiddish classic, directed by Bryna Turetsky. $18–$30. Wed. at 2 and 7, Thurs. at 7, Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2 and 5:30. Through 12/24. • Mazer Theater, 197 E. Broadway (212-279-4200).

The Hostage
The Irish Repertory presents Brendan Behan's dark comedy about a British soldier held captive by a former IRA commander. $35–$40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 12/10. • Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (212-727-2737).

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change
This musical revue is about what, in the context of most contemporary musicals, seems an amusingly quaint subject these days—heterosexual love. $49.50–$55. Mon., Tues., Fri., Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. • Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).

Jitney
This is the revised version of August Wilson's first play, the start of what became a ten-part series, still in progress, about African-American lives, one play per decade. Here the seventies are viewed through the goings-on in the office of a gypsy-cab company in Pittsburgh in 1977. It is so vividly written, acted, and directed (by Marion McClinton, a Wilson specialist) that it keeps you steadily amused, concerned, and moved. All performers are flawless. (Simon: 5/8/00.) $55. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. (212-505-0700).

Juno and the Paycock
Set during the Irish Civil War, Sean O'Casey's 1924 drama tracks a poor family living in a Dublin tenement. $55. Tues.–Sat at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. Through 12/23. • Gramercy Theatre, 127 E. 23rd St. (212-777-4900).

Kiki & Herb: Jesus Wept
The notorious duo's latest extravaganza. If "All I Want For Christmas Is My Two Front Teeth" just makes you want to knock out the other thirty-two, this show's for you. $15. Mon.–Wed., Fri. and Sat. at 7:30. Through 12/30. • Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (212-533-2680.)

Kit Marlowe
David Grimm's new biographical play about playwright Christopher Marlowe is directed by Brian Kulick (*The Winter's Tale*). The cast includes Christian Carmago and Keith David. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. • The Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).

Late Night Catechism
Maripat Donovan as a parochial-school teaching nun. $40. Fri. and Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. • St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

Lifegame
In this improvisational piece by the Improbable Theater, the people responsible for last year's delightfully kid-averse *Shockheaded Peter* will be interviewing practical strangers and acting out scenes from their lives. $25–$37.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 5, Sun. at 3 and 7. Through 12/3. • Jane Street Theatre at the Hotel Riverview Ballroom, 113 Jane St. (212-239-6200).

Previews

News of the World

Are you relishing all the media frenzy so much that you can't wait to see more of it onstage? On December 1, the Jean Cocteau Repertory unveils a revival of the underappreciated **Night and Day** (Angela Madden and Joli Garrett, pictured), a witty 1978 drama about newspaper journalists, an English colonialist, and a dictator who clash in Africa, by that former Bristol *Daily Press* reporter and sometime Miramax employee Tom Stoppard. (See "Off-Off Broadway.")

The Light Outside
Kate Robin's new black comedy. $25. Wed.–Sun. at 7:30. Through 12/16. • Flea, 41 White St. (212-226-2407).

Living in the Wind
Michael Bradford's new romantic drama about two former slaves. $30. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • American Place Theater, 111 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

Lypsinka! The Boxed Set
Lypsinka is back. $35–$40. Wed.–Sun. at 8. Through 12/31. • Westbeth Theatre, 151 Bank St. (212-307-4100).

Maybe, Baby It's You
Playwright-performers Shari Simpson and Charlie Shanian play eleven couples in this romantic comedy. $40. Wed. at 2, Thurs. and Fri. at 8, Sat. at 10. • Theater at St. Luke's, 308 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

Mother Lolita
A new play, set in Los Angeles, by Giullermo Reyes. $15–$25. Through 12/17. • Urban Stages, 259 W. 30th St. (212-755-0541).

Naked Boys Singing
Just like a musical revue, but without pants. $45–$65. Mon., Wed.–Fri., and Sun. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3. • Actor's Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. So. (212-239-6200).

Old Money
The prolific Wendy Wasserstein's (*The Heidi Chronicles, The Sisters Rosensweig*) new play, a tale about generations of rich folks living in an Upper East Side mansion, arrives at Lincoln Center, an institution funded by generations of rich folks who have resided in uptown mansions. Mark Brokaw (*How I Learned to Drive*) directs. $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 12/7 opening. • Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).

Our Sinatra
Kurt Stamm directs this tribute to Ol' Blue Eyes. $50–$80. Mon.–Wed., Fri. and Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 7:30. • Reprise Room at Dylan's, 245 W. 54th (212-239-6200).

Patti LuPone's Matters of the Heart
LuPone in concert. Sun. and Mon. at 8. Through 12/17. • Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).

A Place at the Table
Director Michael Sexton, who directed last year's terrific *Trudy Blue,* returns to the MCC with Simon Block's comical tale of television politics. $35. Tues. at 7, Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3. • MCC Theater, 120 W. 28th St. (212-727-7765).

Sightseeing
Margaret Dulaney's new comedy tracks a television celebrity who tours Third World countries on a cruise ship. $35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 1/7. • Jose Quintero Theatre, 534 W. 42nd St. (212-244-7529).

Stomp
As the title implies, a loud, aggressive, and energetic show. $29.50–$55. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. • Orpheum, 126 Second Ave. (212-477-2477).

Strictly Personal
A comedy about dating and personals. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. • Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (212-239-6200).

The Syringa Tree
Pamela Gien plays 28 characters in a solo show about a young girl in sixties South Africa. $47.50. Tues.–Sat at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 12/10. • Playhouse 91, 316 E. 91st St. (212-307-4100).

Tabletop
Two Davids, Story and Mamet, have popularized the workplace play, a genre to which Rob Ackerman now contributes his highly estimable *Tabletop.* We are in the photographic studio of Marcus Gordon, a nervous perfectionist and slave driver wielding the foul-mouthed insult like a bullwhip. Six terrific actors combine into an ensemble perhaps even greater than its parts. (Simon: 8/14/00.) $47.50. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • American Place Theater, 111 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

Tallulah Hallelujah!
Tovah Feldshuh's take on Bankhead. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2, Sat. at 2:30, and Sun. at 3. • Douglas Fairbanks Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

Photograph by Jonathan Slaff.

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding
A wedding at St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St., then a reception at Vinnie Black's Coliseum, Hotel Edison, 221 W. 46th St., with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. $67.50–$80. Thurs.–Sat. at 7, Sun. at 2. (212-239-6200). •

The Trials of Martin Guerre
A new play by Frank Cossa based on the well-known story. $15–$30. Sun., Mon., and Thurs. at 7, Sat. at 3 and 8. Through 12/17. • New 42nd Street Theater, 348 W. 42nd St. (212-666-6509).

The Unexpected Man
Parisian playwright Yasmina Reza's newest play stars Alan Bates and Eileen Atkins. The estimable duo play a novelist and a devoted fan sitting across from one another on a train and speaking their inner monologues aloud. $60–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 12/31. • Promenade Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (212-239-6200).

The Vagina Monologues
Eve Ensler's ode to fannyboos, nappy dugouts, twats, etc. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 5, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. • Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).

Vieques
Set on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques, this new drama tracks the life of a local family in the fifties. Call for schedule. • Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. (212-889-2850).

What the Butler Saw
Chloë Sevigny stars in Joe Orton's ripping, black sex farce, directed by the New Group's Scott Elliott. Dylan Baker and Lisa Emery co-star. $25–$35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 12/10. • New Group Theatre @ St. Clements Church, 423 W. 46th St. (212-279-4200).

Off-Off Broadway

Another Telepathic Thing
Big Dance Theater revives its Obie- and Bessie-award-winning production of Annie-B Parson's inventive piece. $20. Wed.–Sat. at 8. Through 12/9. • Performing Garage, 33 Wooster St. (212-966-3651).

The Ballad of Crappy and Seapole (According to Seapole)
Stanya Kahn's absurdist solo show. $15. Thurs.–Sun. at 7:30. 11/30–12/17. • P.S. 122, 150 First Ave. (212-477-5288).

Buying Time
In Michael Weller's new play, two partners in a law firm battle. $15. Wed. and Thurs. at 7, Fri. and Sat. at 8, and Sun. at 3. Through 12/3. • New 14th St. Y, 344 E. 14th St. (212-206-1515).

An Evening With Billy Connolly
A solo show by the multitalented Glaswegian. $35–$40. 11/28–12/16 at 8. • Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. (212-691-2272).

Julius Caesar
Aquila Theatre Company presents the classic. $30. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3, Sun. at 7. 11/28–12/23. • Clark Studio, 70 Lincoln Center Plaza (212-279-4200).

Mirror Image
A solo show by Venezuelan actress Aminta DeLara. $15. Thurs.–Sat. at 10, Sun. at 5:30. 11/30–12/17. • La MaMa E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (212-475-7710).

Night and Day
Tom Stoppard's comedy. $20–$40. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3, some Weds. at 8. 12/1–3/22. • Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery (212-677-0060).

100 Stories
Japanese actress Kayoko Shiraishi's solo show. $20. 11/30, 12/1, and 12/2 at 8. • Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (212-752-3015).

Secret History
The latest installment of Ping Chong's "Undesirable Elements" series. $10–$20. Thurs.–Sun. at 8. Through 12/10. • Ohio Theater, 66 Wooster St. (212-529-1557).

cue Art

Edited by Edith Newhal

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Marco Breuer
Recent camera-less photographs from the artist's "Tremor" series, made by moving household tools across photographic paper and applying varying degrees of pressure, and handmade books whose pages he "attacks" with paint, fire, and other mediums; through 12/23. • Roth Horowitz, 160a E. 70th St. (212-717-9067).

James Castle
Drawings of landscapes, farm buildings, domestic interiors, and figures; colored pulp "dream houses"; books; constructions; and other works by the self-taught deaf artist (1900–1977) who worked exclusively with found material; through 1/6/01. • Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (212-794-0550).

Mark Mahosky
Recent etchings; through 12/20. • Rickards, 1045 Madison Ave. (212-924-0858).

Joan Miró
An exhibition of sixteen large-scale paintings dating from 1968 to 1978, held in cooperation with the Foundacio Pilar I Joan Miró a Mallorca; through 1/6/01. • Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. (212-879-6606).

László Moholy-Nagy
Photograms, photographs, drawings, prints, collages, and ephemera by the Hungarian-born artist who became the founding director of the New Bauhaus in Chicago in 1937; through 12/22. • Ubu, 16 E. 78th St. (212-794-4444).

Saul Steinberg
Drawings, works on paper, and mixed-media constructions spanning the late fifties through the late eighties; through 1/13/01. • Baumgold, 74 E. 79th St. (212-861-7338).

Cy Twombly
The artist's first New York show of new paintings in nearly 30 years; through 1/27/01. • Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave. (212-744-2313).

57th Street Area

Sue Coe
A new cycle of prints titled "The Tragedy War"; through 1/6/01. • St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St. (212-245-6734).

Tony Cragg
New sculptures in bronze, stone, polymer, and marble; through 12/30. • Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (212-977-7160).

Nancy Grossman
Assemblages, collages, and sculpture dating from the early sixties to the present; through 1/13/01. • Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St. (212-247-0082).

Sol LeWitt
New works by this artist whose Whitney Museum retrospective opens on December 7, including a painted fiberglass sculpture, a series of gouaches, and one floor-to-ceiling acrylic wall drawing measuring 57 feet in length; 12/2–2/23/01. • PaceWildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. (212-421-3292).

Enrique Martínez Celaya
Monumental paintings on black velvet and works on paper that depict figures, disembodied heads, conch shells, and birch forests; through 12/22. • Barquet, 41 E. 57th St. (212-644-9090).

Henri Michaux
Small-scale paintings surveying the Belgian artist's intrinsic search for true meaning in a chaotic world; through 12/16. • Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. (212-752-1224).

Jaume Plensa
Two sculptural installations that employ light an sound to explore emotional conflict and dualit through 12/22. • Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (212-31 0470).

George Tooker/Ben Shahn
Egg-tempera paintings of figures in interiors and landscapes/Ink drawings on the themes of politics, the disenfranchised, and workers, and studies for propagand posters. Through 12/29. • DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave. (21 247-2111).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Richard Anuszkiewicz
A small survey of paintings dating from 1960 throug the mid-eighties by this artist, a pioneer of Op ar who is currently showing his new sculptures at O Harris Gallery (see "Group Shows, SoHo & TriBeCa"); through 12/23. • Algus, 25 Thompson St (212-966-1758), Tues.–Fri. 3-7, Sat. 11-6.

Kim Dingle
Oil paintings that depict the artist's alter-ego Pris Girls as they skip school and raise a ruckus in an adult-free world; through 12/22. • Sperone Westwater, 12 Greene St. (212-431-3685).

Callum Innes
Recent abstract paintings in which a single oil color i brushed onto a canvas and then brushed away wit turpentine, leaving only vestigial traces of pigment 12/1–1/20/01. • Kelly, 43 Mercer St. (343-2405).

Kevin Larmon
New paintings that evoke the presence of things unseen; 11/30–1/6/01. • Marcus, 578 Broadway (212-226 3200).

Mary Lucier
Three new video installations; through 1/6/01. Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway (212-941-0012).

Marco Maggi
Drawings made over the past year that incorporat such materials as apples, rulers, aluminum foil, an slide mounts; through 1/31/01. • 123 Watts, 123 Watt St. (212-219-1482).

Will Mentor/Diane Neumaier
Computer-assisted paintings on the theme of geneti engineering/Two installations, "Fountains" an "Urns," that employ snapshots of fountains and urn around the world to explore the desire to be linked t great traditions of the past. Through 12/22. • P.P.O.W. 476 Broome St. (212-941-8642).

Arnold Mesches
Paintings, drawings, and collages that are based on th artist's relationship to his family; through 12/23. • Donahue/Sosinski, 560 Broadway (212-266-1111).

Robert Moskowitz
Recent pastel drawings that are predominantly blu and draw on the artist's signature motifs, such a Rodin's *The Thinker* and the World Trade Center and one large-scale painting, *The Razor's Edge*, fro 1996; 11/30–2/3/01. • Blum, 99 Wooster St. (212 343-0441).

Robert Rauschenberg
Recent paintings from the artist's "Apogamy Pods" series; through 12/30. PaceWildenstein, 142 Greene St (212-431-9224). •

Laurie Simmons and Peter Wheelwright/ Wang Du
"The Kaleidoscope House," a 1:12-scale modernis architectural house designed by photographer Lau-

Ground Rules

Galleries are generally open Tuesday through Saturday, from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

ie Simmons and the architect Peter Wheelvright/A life-size sculpture of a Chinese military arade. Through 12/23. • Deitch Projects, 76 Grand St. 212-343-7300).

harles Stiven/Valerie Shaff
harcoal-and-conte drawings of boats that portray hem as mysterious vessels/Photographs of snakes, algators, and other animals perceived by humans as angerous. Through 12/23. • Bridgewater/Lustberg & lumenfeld, 560 Broadway (212-941-6355).

helsea

olly Apfelbaum
hree new floor works composed from hundreds of iamond-shaped pieces of dyed velvet that whirl out rom a center to form a circular pool of color; hrough 12/22. • D'Amelio Terras, 525 W. 22nd St. 212-352-9460).

iah Armajani
lass Room, a transparent structure that incorporates any of the artist's familiar sculptural forms, such as a hair, a folded cot, a Dutch door, wagon wheels, and a odel of a nineteenth-century American clapboard ouse; through 1/6/01. • Senior & Shopmaker, 21 E. 26th t. (212-213-6767).

harles Avery
hotographs, drawings, and linguistic riddles that represent a dog's view of the world; through 12/23. • ee/Glasoe, 529 W. 20th St. (212-924-7545).

ndrea Belag/Susanne Kühn
ew abstract paintings that depict vertical and horizontal bands of vivid color applied in broad brushstrokes/Ink drawings by a Leipzig-born artist who takes inspiration from the German folkloric tradition of the figure wandering in a landscape. Through 12/21. • Maynes, 529 W. 20th St. (212-741-3318).

Mel Bochner
"Measurements," a series of paintings that explore the impossibility of simultaneously seeing and knowing; through 12/22. • Sonnabend, 536 W.22nd St. (212-627-1018).

Mel Chin
KNOWMAD, an installation conceived by the artist and produced by the *KNOWMAD* Confederacy, a "tribe" of graphic designers and gaming engineers; through 12/31. • Taylor, 535 W. 22nd St. (212-966-9059).

David Deutsch
Recent landscape paintings and black-and-white photographs of houses and other buildings; through 12/23. • Gorney Bravin + Lee, 534 W. 26th St. (212-352-8872).

Spencer Finch
New works that are the artist's various plays on the direction "up"; through 12/23. • Postmasters, 459 W. 19th St. (212-727-3323).

Lucian Freud
Etchings made by the British artist over the past fifteen years; through 12/23. • Marks, 523 W. 24th St. (212-243-0200).

Bernard Frize
Abstract paintings in which color and brushstroke are the primary content; through 12/23. • Cohan Leslie and Browne, 138 Tenth Ave. (212-206-8701).

Liam Gillick
Paneled structures, sound systems, screens, and a sequence of platforms that alter the gallery space; through 12/23. • Kaplan, 416 W. 14th St. (212-645-7335).

Betty Goodwin
Recent works by the Canadian artist that speak of the fragility of humanity and comprise a variety of images, formats, and materials, among them tarpaulins, rope, painted and drawn figures, and found objects; through 12/21. • Shainman, 513 W. 20th St. (212-645-1701).

Jan Henle
Drawings on film and on black-and-white and color photographs documenting the artist's monumental land sculptures, and other works dating from 1973 to 2000; 12/2–1/16/01. • Sikkema, 530 W. 22nd St. (212-929-2262).

Charles Jarboe
Paintings of the farm and woodland landscapes surrounding the artist's home base of Baltimore, Maryland; through 12/23. • Tatistcheff, 529 W. 20th St. (212-664-0907).

Lee Krasner
Gouache studies for two murals, including a group of studies from 1940 for a WPA mural that was begun by Willem de Kooning and finished by Krasner, and a group from 1941 for a mural in a radio station's studio; 11/30–1/6/01. • Miller, 524 W. 26th St. (212-366-4774).

Jill Levine
A 25-year survey of the artist's painted wall sculptures; through 12/31. • Art Resources Transfer, Inc., 210 Eleventh Ave. (212-691-5956).

John Maeda
Mixed-media constructions by the Boston-based artist, graphic designer, and computer scientist; through 12/23. • Cristinerose, 529 W. 20th St. (212-206-0297).

Antonio Petracca
Painted wood constructions; through 12/23. • Foster, 529 W. 20th St. (212-229-0044).

Jack Pierson
Photographs, sculptures, and drawings executed directly on the gallery's walls; through 1/6/01. • Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St. (212-242-7727).

Lordy Rodriguez
"States," handmade maps that are part of the artist's ongoing project to reconfigure the entire United States according to her own quirky rules; through 12/23. • Clementine, 526 W. 26th St. (212-243-5937).

Jane Schiowitz/Miriam Bloom
Recent abstract paintings/Sculptures of asymmetrical forms that elicit a variety of associations at once. Through 12/21. • Harris, 529 W. 20th St. (212-463-9666).

Banks Violette
Paintings, sculptures, and an installation that employ heavy-metal iconography; through 12/23. • Team, 527 W. 26th St. (212-279-9219).

Andy Warhol
Graphite drawings of commercial toys, such as Kermit the frog, made by the artist in 1983 and never previously exhibited; through 12/22. • Kasmin, 293 Tenth Ave. (212-563-4474).

Group Shows

57th Street Area

McKee
New works by Celmins, Lemieux, Madsen, Puryear, Tucker, Youngblood; through 12/21. • 745 Fifth Ave. (212-688-5951).

YWCA
Works inspired by childhood tales by Fensterstock, Kortick, Selekman; 11/29–1/21/01. • 610 Lexington Ave. (212-735-9731), Mon.-Fri. 9-7, Sat. 11-3.

Photography

Still Waters

Most artists get a nasty case of nerves the day their shows open. Not **John Waters**. The natty director and writer (*Pink Flamingos, Polyester, Pecker, Serial Mom, Cecil B. Demented,* et al.) seems to thrive in his new exhibition's last-minute installation chaos, even nodding cheerfully to curious gallerygoers who've jumped the gun. Waters has every reason to be upbeat—his latest photographs, of isolated scenes shot directly from a television screen, which constitute his fourth show at American Fine Arts, Co. (22 Wooster Street; through December 30), are his funniest yet. Take *Hungry Hamburger,* a series of greenish-yellow fast-food images appropriated from a drive-in-concession commercial. "To me, this piece is about everything that can happen to film that is terrible in the movie business but really good in art: when it fades and rots and sits in a can abandoned," says Waters. "It's so amazing that this image was supposed to make you want to eat something. It seems like advertising in reverse—an image that would keep you in your car." Then there's *Farrah,* a group of stills of Oscar Levant, Mahalia Jackson, and others onto whom Waters has superimposed the actress's seventies hairstyle; *Gore,* not of Al but of bits of horror-film nastiness that Waters enlarged and cut out by hand; and *Retard,* a gathering of actors who portrayed mentally handicapped characters onscreen. But it may be *Impotent,* three waist-up shots of Richard Burton from the film *Bluebeard,* that most clearly articulates Waters's subversive editorial strategy. "It's the only time he couldn't get a hard-on in his entire movie career," claims Waters. "It's just that one half-a-second shot" of the screen legend, who looks *extremely* discomfited in the photographs. "You take that out of the movie, and it's suddenly the reverse of what Richard Burton's career was about." E.N.

SCENE MISSING

Photograph by Pak Fung Wong.

SoHo and TriBeCa

Alexander
"To Infinity and Beyond: Editions for the Year 2000," projects by twenty international publishers representing both emerging and established artists; through 12/23. • 59 Wooster St. (212-941-9565).

Artists Space
"Lab," an exploration of the evolving borders between new media, design, architecture, and art; through 1/12/01. • 38 Greene St. (212-226-3970).

Dorsky
"Symbols of Survival: Images of Animals in Recent Sculpture," sculptures, photographs, and essays that explore the ubiquity of animal imagery throughout history; through 12/23. • 379 Broadway (212-966-6170).

Exit Art
"Collector's Choice," selections by eight New York collectors showcasing emerging artists; through 12/30. • 548 Broadway (212-966-7745).

Retrospective

A Show About No Thing

Whether transferring what he called "no thing" to film (photographing air and sand, as he did in the seventies), or, more recently, clearing immense plots of overgrown land in St. Croix and Puerto Rico (his current home) and photographing the results (right, *Untitled II,* film drawing, 1983-84), **Jan Henle** has turned his relationship with natural elements into art. Moreover, his plain-soil land sculptures have since been replanted and become living sculpture that he continues to tend. Now Henle's large-scale black-and-white and color "film drawings" can be seen together for the first time in New York, along with a work from his ongoing sculpture, *Road to Nowhere.* At Brent Sikkema, 530 West 22nd Street; December 2 through January 6.

Kind
"Copley Collects CPLY," 25 works from the personal collection of William N. Copley; through 12/30. • 136 Greene St. (212-925-1200).

Lehmann Maupin
"Figure in the Landscape," meditations on traditional subjects in the history of art by Dunham, Gaskell, Guston, Ritchie, Salle; through 1/13/01. • 39 Greene St. (212-965-0753).

OK Harris
Five one-person exhibitions of works by Anuszkiewicz, Baeder, Lane, Long, Ranard; through 12/9. • 383 W. Broadway (212-431-3600).

Sperone Westwater
"American Bricolage," sculpture that explores the idea of *bricolage*—the French concept of the handyman or tinkerer—by Atherton, Burden, Calder, Colson, Delvoye, Friedman, Sachs, Wentworth, Westermann, others; through 12/22. • 142 Greene St. (212-431-3685).

Chelsea

Gladstone
Sculptures by Barney, Pastor, Ray; through 12/22. • 515 W. 24th St. (212-206-9300).

Tonkonow
"Process/Reprocess: Japan and the West," works by Brooks, Diamond, Kusama, Ono, others; through 12/23. • 535 W. 24th St. (212-255-8450).

Photography

Eberhard Bosslet
Black-and-white photographs of "interventions" performed by the artist on architectural ruins in Tenerife, in the Canary Islands; through 12/23. • Gibson, 568 Broadway (212-925-1192).

Stephane Couturier
Large-scale, multi-panel color photographs of architecture in Seoul and Moscow; through 12/23. • Miller, 20 W. 57th St. (212-397-3930).

Lynn Davis
Photographs of futuristic sites and monuments taken mainly in the United States, ranging from the Hoover Dam to Louis Kahn's Jonas Salk Institute; through 1/13/01. • Houk, 745 Fifth Ave. (212-750-7070).

ICP
"Reflections in a Glass Eye: Works From the International Center of Photography Collection"; "Annie Leibovitz: Women"; "Collected Visions: An Installation by Lorie Novak"; through 12/31. • 1133 Sixth Ave. (212-860-1777), Mon.-Wed. 10-5, Thurs. and Fri. till 8 (5-8 voluntary contribution), Sat. and Sun. till 6 (closed 12/25); $8.50, $6 students and seniors.

ICP Uptown
"Eugène Atget: The Pioneer." Photographs of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Paris by the French photographer (1857–1927) drawn from several collections in France, accompanied by prints by Bill Brandt, Walker Evans, Bernd and Hilla Becher, Paul Strand, and other photographers influenced by Atget; through 1/21/01. • 1130 Fifth Ave. (212-860-1777), Tues.-Thurs. 10-5, Fri. till 8 (voluntary contribution 5-8); $6, $4.

Simpson Kalisher
New York street shots from the photographer's 1972 book *Propaganda and Other Photographs;* through 12/23. • De Lellis, 47 E. 68th St. (212-327-1482).

Cindy Sherman
New color photographs that depict the artist as various women ravished by the entertainment industry and their own distorted notions of beauty; through 1/6/01. • Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. (212-206-7100).

Julius Shulman
Photographs of houses designed by the modernist architect Richard Neutra; through 1/6/01. • Richardson, 535 W. 22nd St. (212-343-1255).

Laurie Simmons
"Tourism," a 1984 series of color photographs depicting dolls as tourists; through 12/23. • Skarstedt, 1018 Madison Ave. (212-737-2060).

John Waters
Photographs of images from other directors' movies shot directly from the TV screen; through 12/30. • American Fine Arts, 22 Wooster St. (212-941-0401).

Bruce Weber
New black-and-white photographs of children and adolescents; 11/30–1/16/01. • Miller, 524 W. 26th St. (212-366-4774).

Garry Winogrand
The first exhibition of work by this photographer (1928–1984) since his 1988 MOMA exhibition, comprising New York street scenes shot in the sixties and seventies; 11/30–1/6/01. • Pace/MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (212-759-7999).

Museums

American Craft Museum
"Memories of Murano: American Glass Artists i Venice." Glass works made in Venice by Tina Mar Aufiero, James Carpenter, Dale Chihuly, Dan Daile William Prindle, Ginny Ruffner, Toots Zynsky, an other American glass artists who have been invited t work in the Venetian glass factory of Paolo Venin through 1/7/01. • "Venetian Glass: 20th Century Ita ian Glass From the Olnick Spanu Collection." Worl by Flavio Poli, Carlos Scarpa, Thomas Stearns, Paol Venini, and other glass artists from the collection Nancy Olnick and Giorgio Spanu; through 1/7/01. 40 W. 53rd St. (212-956-3535), Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., an Sun. 10-6, Thurs. 10-8 (pay what you wish 6-8); $5, $2.5 students and seniors.

American Museum of Natural History •
Central Park West at 79th St. (212-769-5100); Sun.-Thur 10-5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10-8:45; $8 suggested contributio $6 students and seniors, $4.50 children.

Asia Society at Midtown
"Power and Desire: South Asian Paintings From th San Diego Museum of Art, Edwin Binney 3rd Collection." Paintings created under the patronage of rule of South Asian courts between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; through 1/7/01. • 502 Park Ave., a 59th St. (212-288-6400), Tues.-Sat. 10-6; Sun. noon-5. $ $2 students and seniors (free Tues.-Fri. noon-2).

Bard Graduate Center for Studies in th Decorative Arts
"Women Designers in the U.S.A., 1900–2000: Diversity and Difference"; through 2/25/01. • 18 W. 86th St (212-501-3000), Tues.-Sun. 11-5 (Thurs. to 8); $2, $1 students and seniors.

Bronx Museum of the Arts
"Leonardo Drew." One new sculpture composed o two sections—one of cotton and the other of woo and found objects—and related drawings; throug 3/4/01 • "Carlos Garaicoa: The Ruins, The Utopia. Drawing, photographs, and mixed-media and vide installations by a Havana-based artist; throug 3/4/01. • "Context: Mexico's Taller de Gráfica Popular and Its Legacy." Prints from the museum's permanent collection made by various members of th workshop; through 3/4/01. • 1040 Grand Concourse Bronx (718-681-6000), Wed. 3-9, Thurs. and Fri. 10-5 Sat. and Sun. noon-6; $3, $2 students and seniors, Wed free.

Brooklyn Museum of Art
"Nardo di Cione." An exhibition celebrating the reunion of the museum's Nardo di Cione altarpiece *Madonna and Child Enthroned With Saints*, and its "lost" uppermost panel; through 2/18/01. • "Robots, Astro-

Photograph courtesy of Brent Sikkema

nauts, and Space Toys: The Robert Lesser Collection." Almost 300 robots and space toys displayed with their original packaging; through 1/28/01. • "Gold of the Nomads: Scythian Treasures From Ancient Ukraine." More than 170 articles of personal adornment, ceremony, and battle created by Scythian artists and Greek goldsmiths; through 1/21/01. • "Lee Krasner." The first full-scale retrospective of the American abstract painter since her death in 1984; through 1/7/01. • "Hip-Hop Nation: Roots, Rhymes, and Rage." An exhibition exploring the growth of hip-hop music through music, video, photography, clothing, and ephemera from its earliest stages through the present day, including clothing and accessories from Afrika Bambaataa, Run-DMC, the Beastie Boys, Salt N' Pepa, Tupac Shakur, and Puff Daddy; through 12/31. • 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); Wed.-Fri. 10-5, Sat. 11-6 (till 11 P.M. on the first Saturday of every month), Sun. 11-6; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution

"The Opulent Eye of Alexander Girard." A retrospective of works by the mid-century American designer and architect (1907–1993); through 3/18/01. • "Masterpieces From the Vitra Design Museum: Furnishing the Modern Era." Furniture selected for its importance in the evolution of industrial furniture design; through 2/4/01. • 2 E. 91st St. (212-849-8300), Wed.-Sat. 10-5, Sun. noon-5, Tues. 10-9 (5-9, free admission); $8, $3 students and seniors.

Dia Center for the Arts

"Panamarenko: *Orbit*." An exhibition pairing the Belgian artist's key work, *Aeromodeller*, an experimental flying machine built in 1969–71, with a work created this year; 11/29–6/17/01. • "Bridget Riley: *Reconnaissance*." The British artist's seminal paintings from the sixties and seventies in which carefully calibrated geometric patterns seem to move rhythmically across a canvas; through 6/17/01. • "Jorge Pardo: *Project*." A transformation of the Dia Center's 6000-square-foot ground floor featuring colored ceramic tiles, mural paintings, glass dividers, stylish seating, increased natural light, and an expanded bookstore; through 6/17/01. • "Rodney Graham and Bruce Nauman: . . . *the nearest faraway place* . . ." New and earlier works by both artists that reflect their shared interests in the myth of the American West; through 6/17/01. • 548 W. 22nd St. (212-989-5566), Wed.-Sun. noon-6; $6, $3 students and seniors.

Drawing Center

"Untitled Passages by Henri Michaux." The first museum exhibition in more than twenty years of drawings by the Belgian artist and poet (1899–1984); through 12/20. • "Adrienne Gallinari: Wall Drawings"; through 12/20. • 35 Wooster St. (212-219-2166), Tues.-Fri. 10-6, Sat. 11-6; donation suggested.

Frick Collection

"Raeburn's *The Reverend Robert Walker Skating on Duddingston Loch*." Sir Henry Raeburn's celebrated skating minister on loan from the National Gallery of Scotland; 12/5–1/21/01. • "Mantegna's *Descent Into Limbo*, From the Barbara Piasecka Johnson Collection." A smaller version of Mantegna's original masterpiece that was probably painted by the artist for Ferdinand Carlo, the last Duke of Mantua, around 1470–75; through 8/1/03. • "Six Paintings From the Former Collection of Mr. and Mrs. John Hay Whitney on Loan From the Greentree Foundation." Works by Corot, Degas, Manet, Picasso, Redon; through 7/29/01. • 1 E. 70th St. (212-288-0700); Tues.-Sat. 10-6, Sun. 1-6; $7, $5 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Grey Art Gallery

"Ben Shahn's New York: The Photography of Modern Times." Photographs of New York City in the thirties by the Social Realist painter; through 1/27/01. • 100 Washington Square East (212-998-6780); Tues., Thurs., Fri. 11-6, Wed. 11-8, Sat. 11-5; $2.50 suggested donation.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

"Giorgio Armani." A look at the career of the fashion designer through thematic groupings of his designs from the past 25 years; through 1/17/01. • "Amazons of the Avant-Garde: Alexandra Exter, Natalia Goncharova, Liubov Popova, Olga Rozanova, Varvara Stepanova, and Nadezhda Udaltsova." Paintings and works on paper by six Russian avant-garde women artists, drawn from more than 30 public and private collections; through 1/7/01. • "Project for a New Guggenheim Museum in New York City." Architect Frank Gehry's preliminary plans and models for a new Guggenheim developed in connection with the museum's response to a Request for Proposals issued by the New York City Economic Development Corporation for the development of Piers 9, 13, and 14 on the East River in lower Manhattan; through 4/21/01. • 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (212-423-3500); Sun.-Wed. 9-6, Fri. and Sat. 9-8 (Fri. 6-8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; $12, $8 students and seniors.

Japan Society

"Yes Yoko Ono." The first American retrospective of works by the avant-garde artist, including objects, installations, language pieces, films, photographs, music, and performance art dating from 1960 to the present; through 1/14/01. • 333 E. 47th St. (212-832-1155), Tues.-Sun. 11-6; $5 suggested contribution.

Jewish Museum

"Morocco: Jews and Art in a Muslim Land." Decorative objects, artworks, costumes, and photographs documenting Jewish life in Morocco for the past 2,000 years; through 2/11/01. • 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (212-423-3200); Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11-5:45, Tues. 11-8 (Tues. after 5 pay what you wish); $8, $5.50 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art

"A Century of Design, Part III: 1950–1975." The third in a four-part series of exhibitions surveying twentieth-century design in all media; through 4/1/01. • "Annual Christmas Tree and Neapolitan Crèche"; through 1/7/01. • "The Still Lifes of Evaristo Baschenis: The Music of Silence." Paintings by the seventeenth-century Italian artist known for his poetic still lifes of musical instruments; through 3/4/01. • "Rain From the Moon: Silver in Ancient Peru." Approximately 130 silver objects from private and public collections in the United States; through 4/22/01. • "The Golden Deer of Eurasia: Scythian and Sarmatian Treasures From the Russian Steppes." Works of gold and silver recently excavated at Filippovka in southern Russia, along with related Scythian, Sarmatian, and Siberian objects from the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg; through 2/4/01. • "Romanticism and the School of Nature: Nineteenth-Century Drawings and Paintings From the Karen B. Cohen Collection." Works by Constable, Couture, Daubigny, Delacroix, Rousseau, others; through 1/21/01. • "The Year One: Art of the Ancient World, East and West." Works of art from Western Europe, the Mediterranean, Africa, the Middle East, India, China, Southeast Asia, and the Americas from the museum's collections that were produced some 2,000 years ago in the period just before and after the Year One; through 1/14/01. • "Egyptian Art at Eton College: Selections from the Myers Museum." Ancient Egyptian decorative artworks that were acquired by Major William Joseph Myers (1858–1899), an alumnus of the college; through 1/21/01. • "Thomas Sully in the Metropolitan." Paintings and drawings by the Philadelphia portraitist (1783–1872) from the museum's collection, including self-portraits, depictions of prominent social figures, members of the artist's family, and other subjects; through 12/31. • "Queen Victoria and Thomas Sully." Oil portraits, wash drawings, and graphite sketches made between 1837 and 1838, when the artist was commissioned to paint the young queen; through 12/31. • "Art and the Empire City: New York, 1825–1861." Paintings, sculpture, architectural drawings, photographs, and decorative arts created in New York City, from the museum's own collections and from lenders in the United States and Europe; through 1/17/01. • "La Divine Comtesse: Photographs of the Countess de Castiglione." Photographs of the Countess de Castiglione, the mistress of Napoleon III and considered a great beauty of her day, that were taken by the photographer Pierre-Louis Pierson under her direction; through 12/31. • "The Embodied Image: Chinese Calligraphy From the John B. Elliott Collection." Hanging scrolls, handscrolls, album leaves, and letters from the Elliott Collection of the Art Museum, Princeton University, accompanied by a selection of calligraphic works from the Metropolitan's collection; through 1/7/01. • "American Modern: 1925–1940—Design for a New Age." More than 100 objects from the museum's collection and from the John C. Waddell Collection, including furniture, clocks, appliances, lamps, posters, and textiles; through 1/9/01. • "Painters in Paris: 1895–1950." Paintings by Bonnard, Braque, Chagall, Léger, Matisse, Picasso, and other artists who worked in Paris; through 12/31. • 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (212-879-5500); Tues.-Thurs. and Sun. 9:30-5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30-9; $10 contribution, $5 students and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (212-923-3700); Tues.-Sun. 9:30-4:45; $10, $5 students and seniors.

Morgan Library

"Ruskin's Italy, Ruskin's England." An exhibition commemorating the centenary of the death of the English critic, artist, and social commentator (1819–1900) through letters, diaries, sketchbooks, photographs, and other materials from the library's holdings; through 1/7/01. • "Collecting for Centuries: Anniversary Gifts." An exhibition honoring the library's 75th anniversary as a public institution and the 50th anniversary of the Association of Fellows, including more than 100 works received by and promised to the library. • 29 E. 36th St. (212-685-0008), Tues.-Thurs. 10:30-5, Fri. 10:30-8, Sat. 10:30-6, Sun. noon-6; $8, $6 students and seniors.

El Museo del Barrio

"Latin American Artist-Photographers From the Lehigh University Art Galleries Collection." More than 100 photographs by 50 modern and contemporary Latin American and Latino artists drawn from the permanent collection of the Lehigh University Art Galleries, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pa.; through 1/14/01. • 1230 Fifth Ave. (212-831-7272), Wed.-Sun. 11-5; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Museum for African Art

"In the Presence of Spirits: African Art From the National Museum of Ethnology, Lisbon." Artworks from Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea Bissau; through 12/31. • 593 Broadway (212-966-1313), Tues.-Fri. 10:30-5:30, Sat. and Sun. noon-6; $5, $2.50 students, seniors, and children.

Museum of American Folk Art

"An Engagement With Folk Art, Cyril I. Nelson's Gifts to the Museum." Quilts, textiles, coverlets, painted and decorated furniture, paintings, and other works given to the museum by one of its trustees; through 1/7/01. • Two Lincoln Square (212-595-9533), Tues.-Sun. 11:30-7:30; free.

Museum of Modern Art

"MOMA 2000: Open Ends." An exhibition comprising approximately twelve separate exhibitions of the museum's acquisitions in all media since 1960, including paintings, sculpture, photography, video, design, and architectural drawings and models; through 1/20/01 • "Collection Highlights." More than 45 masterworks from the museum's permanent collection of painting and sculpture; through 1/28/01. • 11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480); Sat.-Tues., Thurs. 10:30-5:45, Fri. 10:30-8:15 (4:30-8:15 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; $10, $6.50 students and seniors.

Museum of the City of New York

"Guys & Dolls: The Fabled Musical of Broadway." Scene designs, costumes, photographs, and ephemera drawn from the archives of composer Frank Loesser and playwright Abe Burrows that reveal how they turned the Damon Runyon story "The Idyll of Miss Sarah Brown" into the 1950 hit musical; through 6/10/01. • "The City Shops: Photographs by Martha Cooper and Fred W. McDarrah." Images from the sixties to the present documenting shops in New York City neighborhoods; through 4/15/01. • "A Portrait of Paris: Eugène Atget at Work." Images of architecture in Paris at the turn of the past century, taken by the French photographer during the last two decades of his life; through 2/4/01. • "Life of the People: Realist Prints and Drawings From the Ben and Beatrice Rose Collection, 1912–1948." Works by Jacob Burck, Hugo Gellert, Louis Lozowick, John Sloan, and other Social Realists who were working in the first half of the twentieth century; through 1/14/01. • "Under the El." Images of New York City life in prints, watercolors, and drawings from the museum's collection; through 12/3. • 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (212-534-1672), Wed.-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 1-5; $5 suggested contribution, $4 students and seniors.

Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology
"Perry Ellis." Fourteen of the designer's outfits that were donated to the museum by the Perry Ellis Morphos Collection; through 1/13/01. • "A Woman's Hand: Designing Textiles in America, 1945–1969." Printed, woven, and knitted textiles for interiors and apparel by more than 40 women designers; through 1/13/01. • "Bonnie Cashin, Practical Dreamer." An exhibition paying tribute to the American clothing designer through designs, childhood and professional sketches, photographs, film stills, clips, personal scrapbooks, and other ephemera; through 1/6/01. • Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (212-217-7642), Tues.-Fri. 12-8, Sat. 10-5; free.

National Academy of Design
"Rave Reviews: American Art and Its Critics, 1826–1925." An exhibition examining the Academy's role in shaping the formation of American art criticism, with paintings by George Bellows, Thomas Cole, Thomas Eakins, Childe Hassam, Winslow Homer, John Singer Sargent, and others; through 12/31. • 1083 Fifth Ave. (212-369-4880), Wed., Thurs., Sat., Sun. noon-5, Fri. 10-6; $5.

New Museum of Contemporary Art
"Pierre et Gilles." Hand-painted photographs from the past two decades by the French collaborative team; through 1/7/01. • "Adrian Piper: A Retrospective and MEDI(t)Ations." Objects, installations, performances, videos, and soundworks by the artist known for her identity-based works; through 1/21/01. • 583 Broadway (212-219-1222), Wed. and Sun. noon-6, Thurs.-Sat. noon-8 (free Thurs. 6-8); $6, $3 artists, students, and seniors.

New York Public Library
"Utopia: The Search for the Ideal Society in the Western World." A collaborative exhibition between the NYPL and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France featuring works from both institutions' collections on the theme of utopia; through 1/27/01. • "Drawings by Charles Addams." A rotating selection of drawings by the *New Yorker* cartoonist; through 6/30/01. • Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (212-869-8089); Mon. 10-6, Tues. and Wed. 11-7:30, Thurs.-Sat. 10-6; free

New-York Historical Society
"Eye of the Storm: The Civil War Drawings of Robert Knox Sneden." Watercolors, maps, and drawings depicting Robert K. Sneden's experience as a soldier in a New York regiment of the Army of the Potomac, as a Union map-maker, and as a prisoner of war in some of the worst Confederate prisons; through 12/31. • "Pray for Me: American Wartime Messages, 1759–1968." Letters, prints, and photographs drawn from the society's collection; through 12/31. • "Elder Grace: The Nobility of Aging." Photographs of 80 African-American women and men by Chester Higgins Jr.; through 3/4/01. • "Intimate Friends: Thomas Cole, Asher Durand, William Cullen Bryant." Paintings, manuscripts, and periodicals relating to Cole and Durand, founders of the Hudson River School, and their poet-editor friend; through 2/4/01. • "Inventing the Skyline: The Architecture of Cass Gilbert." Sketches, presentation drawings, letters, and other materials from the society's Cass Gilbert Collection, relating to such projects as the U.S. Customs House and the Woolworth Building; through 1/21/01. • 2 W. 77th St. (212-873-3400); Tues.-Sun. 11-5; $5, $3 seniors and children.

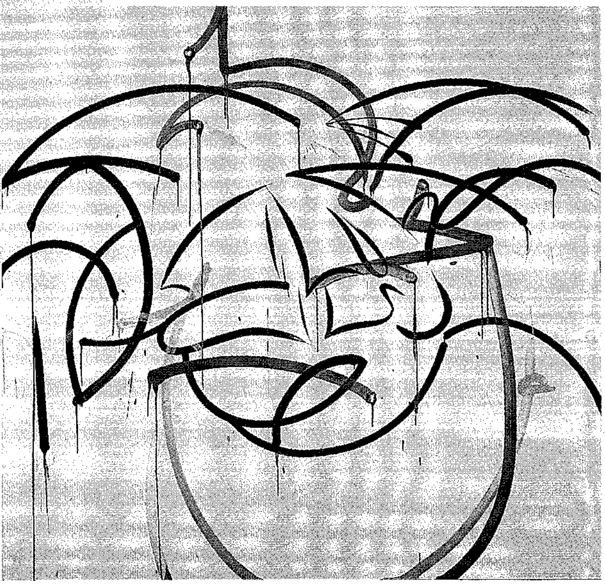
P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center
"Disasters of War: Works by Francisco de Goya, Henry Darger, and Jake and Dinos Chapman." Works that mediate horrific historical events; through 2/25/01. • "Georges Adéagbo: *Abraham—L'ami de Dieu.*" Installations by a West African artist that combine paintings, sculptures, books, hand-written texts, photographs, newspaper articles, and objects; through 3/29/01. • "Special Projects Program, Winter 2000." New projects by Geyer and Hayes, Pilson, and Rakowitz; through 1/30/01. • "John Wesley." The first U.S. retrospective of works by this painter known for his palette of pinks and baby blues, his use of painted "frames" within his pictures, and his daydreamlike combinations of emblems, historical and comic-book figures, animals, and sexy women; through 1/15/01 • "Santiago Sierra." A sculpture and performance work by a Mexico-based artist; through 1/15/01. • "Takashi Murakami: Second Mission Project ko2." A three-part sculptural installation depicting a life-size adolescent girl morphing into an airplane; through 11/30. • 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084), Wed.-Sun. noon-6; $5 suggested donation.

Queens Museum of Art
"Seductions and Games: Recent Video Installations by Maureen Connor." The first American survey of the artist's interactive-media production; through 1/28/01. • "Tiffany Behind the Glass." An exhibition focusing on the construction, manufacture, marketing, and conservation of lamp and window production; through 2/4/01. • New York City Building, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens (718-592-9700), Tues.-Fri. 10-5, Sat. and Sun. noon-5; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Talent

Line Dance

Now, several years after Sue Williams jettisoned her sexual webs of bodies and body parts for gestural abstraction, the change seems a thoroughly natural evolution. The artist's second New York show of large abstract paintings is an opportunity to see a dazzling painter make the most of her gifts—in Williams's case, her ability to imbue ribbons of vivid color with a fluid, cartoony energy all her own—while clearly still exploring new terrain. At 303 Gallery, 525 West 22nd Street; through December 16.



Photograph courtesy of 303 Gallery.

Studio Museum in Harlem
"Whitfield Lovell: Whispers From the Walls." A mixed-media installation inspired by the forced removal of a thriving African-American community in Denton, Texas, in 1921; through 12/31. • "Isaac Julien: Vagabondia." A video installation by a British filmmaker that is his response to the Sir John Soane Museum in London, which houses an eccentric collection of antiquities amassed by Soane in the eighteenth century; through 1/7/01. • "Martin Puryear: The *Cane* Project." A series of woodblock prints by the sculptor that were inspired by Harlem Renaissance writer Jean Toomer's classic novel *Cane;* through 1/7/01. • 144 W. 125th St. (212-864-4500), Wed. and Thurs. noon-6, Fri. noon-8, Sat. and Sun. noon-6; $5, $3 students and seniors.

Whitney Museum of American Art
"Edward Steichen." A retrospective of the photographer's work including nearly 200 vintage prints as well as rarely seen examples of his work as a painter, designer of textiles, and curator of exhibitions; through 2/4/01. • "Roni Horn: Still Water (The River Thames, for Example." A piece comprising fifteen photographic images, printed as lithographs, of the surface of the River Thames; through 1/14/01. • "Jud Kalkut: Dreamreels." Film and video environments by one of the most radical experimenters in cinematic psychedelia of the sixties; through 12/3. • 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (212-570-3676); Tues., Wed., Thurs., Sat., Sun. 11-6, Fri 1-9 (pay what you wish Fri. 6-9); $10, $8 students, seniors, and groups of fifteen or more.

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris
"Sowon Kwon: Two or Three Corridors." A site-specific installation of artworks chosen by the artist from the private hallways of Philip Morris Companies Inc.'s international headquarters; through 1/5/01. • "Pastoral Pop!" Site-specific commissioned works by Katrin Asbury, Rob de Mar, Rachel Feinstein, Peter Gould, Jason Middlebrook, Lisa Ruyter, and Alyson Shotz; through 12/15. • 120 Park Ave. (917-663-2550), Mon.-Fri. 11-6 (Thurs. till 7:30); free.

Auctions

Christie's
11/29 at 10 and 2: "American Paintings." On view from 11/25. 11/30 at 6: "Cigars." On view from 11/25. 12/1 at 10 and 2: "Wine." On view from 11/25. 12/4 at 10: "Sporting Art." On view from 12/2. 12/5 at 10 and 2: "Important Jewels." On view from 12/2. • 20 Rockefeller Plaza (212-636-2000).

Christie's East
11/30 at 10: "Important Private Collection of Italian Glass." On view from 11/25. 12/5 at 10: "Entertainment Memorabilia." On view from 12/2. • 219 E. 67th St. (212-606-0430).

Doyle
11/29 at 10: "American Furniture and Decorations." On view from 11/25. 12/5 at 1: "American Paintings and Sculpture." On view from 12/2. • 175 E. 87th St. (212-427-2730).

Sotheby's
11/29 at 10:15 and 2: "Books and Manuscripts." On view from 11/25. 11/29 at 10:15 and 2: "American Indian Art." On view from 11/25. 11/30 at 10:15 and 2: "American Paintings." On view from 11/25. 12/1 at 10:15 and 2: "Art Nouveau." On view from 11/25. 12/2 at 10:15 and 2: "Tiffany." On view from 11/25. 12/5 at 10:15 and 2: "Contemporary Indian Paintings." On view from 12/1. • 1334 York Ave., at 72nd St. (212-606-7000).

Swann Galleries
11/30 at 10:30: "Printed and Manuscript Americana." On view from 11/27. • 104 E. 25th St. (212-254-4710).

Restaurants

Edited by Robin Raisfeld
& Rob Patronite

round Rules

These listings are a selective guide to the city's restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. Stars (★) indicate our critics' recommendations, either for outstanding overall quality or in recognition of at least one exceptional feature, and are usually awarded after the restaurant has been formally reviewed. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive; (M) = moderate; (I) = inexpensive. Restaurants listed accept all major credit cards, except where noted; ($) = cash only; "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted card.

ew and Noteworthy

dä
s you might guess from the Murano-glass chandeers and bas-relief nudes, this isn't your run-of-theill curry kitchen. Your dinner choices are limited to vo streamlined prix fixe menus that run $55 and $65, nd feature newfangled novelties like salmon uenelles with cashew rice and fresh coconut curry, aram masala quail with date-and-pistachio pillau, and ild-mushroom biryani with white-truffle oil. • 208 E. 3th St. (212-371-6060). (M–E)

AZ
you think pan-Asian fusion is so last decade, make aste to the Flatiron triplex that used to be Flowers, made with a glass elevator and retractable roof and ow home to chef Patricia Yeo and her inspired culiary inventions. What works? A trio of sensational utneys on Indian flatbread, and lapsang souchonnoked quail with scallion pancakes, for starters. A reet-level lounge caters to lighter appetites. • 21 W. th St. (212-691-8888). (E)

Baldoria
rank Pellegrino Jr.'s father earned the nickname rankie No after years of politely declining requests r reservations at Rao's, his ten-table East Harlem lebrity hangout. Junior offers better odds in the theer district: 136 seats, plus a raw bar upstairs. A fugive from Felidia's posh kitchen adds some verve to the ome-style Neapolitan seafood salad and roasted peppers Pellegrino borrowed from his dad uptown. • 249 . 49th St. (212-582-0460). (E)

Bar Demi
erbena's Diane Forley named this twelve-seat wine rine for its half-address and devotion to hard-tond half bottles. Then she challenged sommelier aron von Rock to match appropriate wines with er ever-so-dainty "tiers" of flavor-packed finger food. rder the Pinot Noir package, for instance, and share hereal foie gras mousse, grilled baby lamb chops, and on Rock's Pinot of choice. Or flex your own wineairing muscles and order a la carte. • 125 1/2 E. 17th St. 12-260-0900). (M)

Blue Hill
lex Urena's seasonal American menu draws on his ooking tour of France and Spain, which is where e picked up the haute habit of garnishing food ith foam (to wit: a delicious asparagus soup with armesan froth). But despite a certain culinary endiness, the atmosphere couldn't be more conenial or the service less pretentious. The room is retty, too, comfortable and sophisticated, and the ree-sided limestone bar accommodates diners and rinkers alike. • 75 Washington Pl. (212-539-1776). M–E)

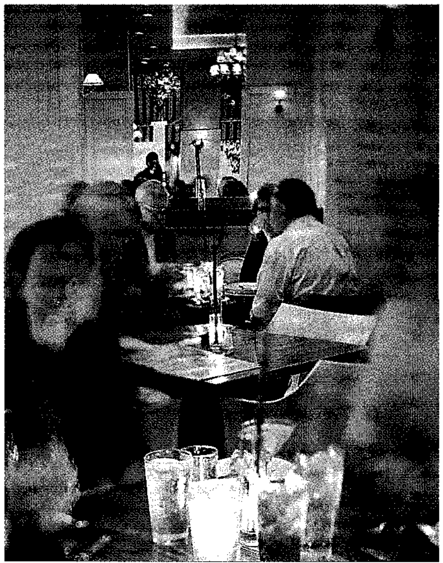
★ Caffé La Grolla
The itty-bitty offshoot of Ristorante La Grolla performs three essential functions: It accommodates 28 extra bodies; it provides a more casual, late-night alternative to its popular parent; and it delivers. The menu's an appealing mix of La Grolla classics its regulars can't live without (veal scallopine, scrumptious artichokes) and brand-new dishes like supernally moist roasted pork loin and Neapolitan-style pizzas. • 411A Amsterdam Ave., nr. 80th St. (212-579-9200). (I–M)

★ Chicama
Douglas Rodriguez is so disarmingly inventive that he could serve his spectacular seviches, his drippingly seductive goat stew, and his daunting, did-Mom-ever-make-it-like-this? suckling pig from a lean-to in Union Square and there'd be no room left for the other vendors. Instead, he inhabits a rustic dream hut that takes you somewhere north of Brazil, east of Mardi Gras, and south of Heaven. • 35 E. 18th St. (212-505-2233). (M–E)

Chinghalle
At what Mark Strausman calls his "midlife-crisis restaurant," the indefatigable force behind Campagna and Fred's at Barneys has gone off in a newish food direction, somewhere between *Thin Man*-era supper club fare (Waldorf crab salad, London broil) and the chef's own intensely satisfying Jewish-Italian oeuvre (chicken livers sautéed in port, grilled pizza). Decorative touches like Belgian train-seat booths and naked-bulb chandeliers suit the artfully aged premises, once a meatpacking plant. • 50 Gansevoort St. (212-242-3200). (M)

Chinoiserie
Abraham Merchant of Merchants and ex Cellar in the Sky chef Marc Murphy, the team behind the short-lived La Fourchette, reunite in the whimsically decorated basement of the new Hotel Giraffe. Murphy's fusion menu melds Chinese ingredients and French technique in dishes like goujonettes of sole with fermented black bean aioli, and buffalo hanger steak with tamarind-glazed gluten, the Saturday-night special. • 365 Park Ave. So., nr. 26th St. (212-213-3125). (M)

★ Chow Bar
Chef-partner Peter Klein started out cooking at China Grill and El Teddy's, then parlayed that spicy Chino-Latino experience into a lucrative cross-country consulting gig. Luckily for us, he's settled down in the West Village, where's he's turning out addictive honey-plum-glazed spareribs, Sichuan steak frites, and Shanghai lobster noodles. Potent house cocktails fuel a lively bar crowd, which seems ecstatic to finally find a quasi-exotic neighborhood place to call its own. • 230 W. 4th St. (212-633-2212). (M)



First Taste

X Marks the Spot

We wish the Restaurant Police would slap an electronic bracelet around John Tesar's ankle. Then maybe we could keep track of his far-flung whereabouts. C'mon, John—we followed you wherever you went: to 13 Barrow, West Village street map in hand; to a Flatiron nightclub, wearing earplugs; to the Upper West Side, where good restaurants die young; and most recently to Vine, where you colonized the no-man's land of the financial district. But we're getting tired. Now we hear you're in Hell's Kitchen, at the brand-new **44 & X**, a mod Manhattan version of a southern parlor with creamy white wainscoting, a bar-back water wall, and soft light glinting off the curved tile that hides the kitchen. But even if we didn't know you were around, we might have guessed from the inspired American food that's already packing in locals and clued-in theatergoers. Your telltale designer pizzas are gone, but there's a refreshingly straightforward, unspiked mac-and-cheese, rich and gooey and nary a truffle in sight; individual meat loaf swathed with tomato sauce; and greaselessly crispy buttermilk fried chicken atop a chive waffle, an elegant take on a dish rarely seen below 125th Street. A stellar wedge of iceberg with blue cheese should keep the lowly, crunchy head on its comeback trail. An even better thatch of buttermilk-ranch-dressed frisée is surrounded by five plump and juicy fried oysters. On a cold, windy night, squash bisque with chanterelles and a swirl of maple crème fraîche, and braised beef short ribs with mashed root vegetables, are just what we had in mind. And although you oblige Big Night Outers with cognac-seared, pepper-crusted filet mignon, you seem just as happy grilling postshow burgers for the performers who come to unwind. For their sake, John, and ours, please stay put. (622 Tenth Avenue, at 44th Street; 212-977-1170.) R.P.

otograph by Kenneth Chen.

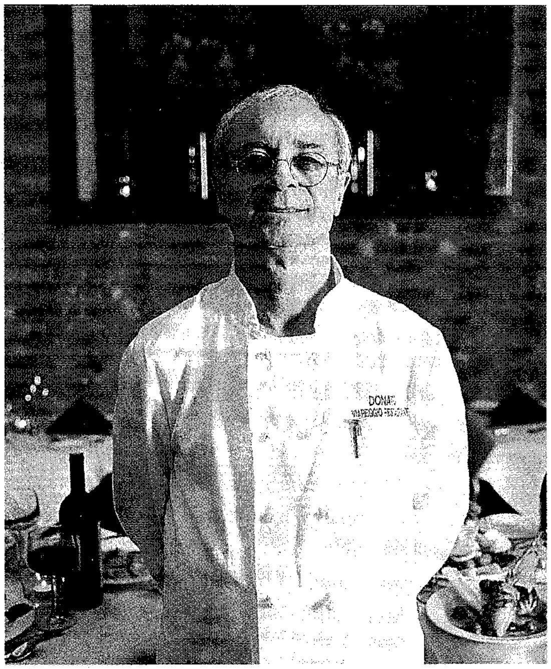
City Eatery
Who knows? With a spiffy renovation and new chef Scott Conant (formerly of Chianti and San Domenico) in the kitchen turning out lusty braised short ribs, zesty pastas, and olive-oil-poached tuna, the dining room formerly known as Astor Restaurant may become as popular a NoHo destination as the lively lounge downstairs. • 316 Bowery (212-253-8644). (I–M)

Cocina Cuzco
This colorful room decorated with Incan pottery is connected to the jungle-themed Lemongrass Grill next door; they're both part of a restaurant empire that includes the eight-branch Lemongrass Thai-food chain, plus assorted Japanese, Korean, and Malaysian kitchens. But there's no culinary confusion on this traditional menu, which features seven kinds of seviche, succulent rotisserie chicken, and varying degrees of aji-pepper-spiced sauces. • 55 Ave. A (212-529-3469). (I) ($)

Opening

Leader of the Pack

Last seen (briefly) at La Sirena in Astoria, Donato Deserio has turned up at **Viareggio**, a new Italian restaurant in a neighborhood overrun with them. At first glance, there's nothing to distinguish this dining room from countless others. But the kitchen's another story. Deserio's deft touch with superbly al dente pastas like creamless rigatoni alla vodka reinvigorates old standards. And entrées like a subtle Parmigiano-Reggiano-crusted chicken breast in white-wine sauce, and Deserio's signature cognac-flamed lobster, taste almost new. As does an offbeat *amuse-bouche* of tomato salsa, seasoned with cherry peppers and ginger and served with crispy wafers of fried Parmigiano-Reggiano. (1347 Second Avenue, at 71st Street; 212-585-2900.)



Curry Leaf
While the Curry Hill competition focuses on the food of specific subcontinental regions—or, at the very least, hews to the meat-eating north or the veggie-oriented south—the idea here is to expand the edible horizons by offering Kashmiri chicken korma alongside Pakistani chana masala and Goan lamb vindaloo. There's more to Indian food, after all, than curry powder—there's the leaf, too, used here as a garnish. • 99 Lexington Ave., at 27th St. (212-725-5558). (M)

★ Del Frisco's
Want to see what mahogany fashioned by testosterone looks like? This is without question the most urbanely elegant steakhouse you will ever see, its meat locker filled with terrific beef. Now if they can only figure out how to get their staff up to the level of their surroundings and kitchen. The place is New York landmark potential. • 1221 Sixth Ave., at 49th St. (212-575-5129). (E)

Dim Sum gogo
What do you get when a French-American food writer (Colette Rossant) collaborates with a Hong Kong chef (Guy Lieu)? Dumpling dough flavored with beet juice, seasoned beef patties on steamed buns with taro fries, roast chicken smothered with fried garlic stems, and 24 kinds of dumplings. Plus four variations on the dough-wrapper theme, four different sauces, and microwave-safe takeout containers. • 5 E. Broadway (212-732-0797). (I–M)

★ The Dining Room
You know how you love cooking those intimate dinners at home for just you and your close friends? Oh, you don't. Well then don't you wish you were at one? This scrumptious example of turning lemons into lemon soufflé not only transforms an awkward layout into a series of cozy hideaways but it gets you all warm and snuggly with hearty American cuisine that surprisingly weighs less than the conversations around it. • 154 E. 79th St. (212-327-2500). (M–E)

District
At this new hotel restaurant, David Rockwell's design makes playful reference to the theater-district locale, and Sam DeMarco's menus make mouthwatering reference to the fun, original food he popularized downtown at First. For breakfast, there's the Scramble (smoked salmon, cream-cheese fondue, latkes, and dill-caper gremolata). For lunch, "double features" like potato pierogi with a brisket sandwich. Plus a $28 pre-theater dinner and a late-night "mini-bar." • 130 W. 46th St. (212-485-2999). (M)

Enoteca Don Antonio
The ecumenical owner of Maison and Tapería Madrid has ventured around the corner to open their Italian counterpart, a rustic, wooden-beamed room with a working fireplace and a menu that makes its thoroughly annotated way down the boot, from Trentino (bisteca al forno) to Puglia (pizza bianca with potatoes and robiola cheese). An on-site bakery opens soon for breakfast pastries and French breads. • 252 E. 77th St. (212-879-4821). (M) ($)

★ Esca
Somewhere in between overseeing Babbo and Lupa, taping his cooking show, and just basking in the glory of his own undeniable greatness, Mario Batali has found time to earn another gastronomic gold star. At Esca, the overachiever in the orange clogs, partner Joe Bastianich, and chef David Pasternack do for Southern Italian seafood what Le Bernardin has done for French: The poured concrete bar with a built-in conduit for ice and oysters is an inspired take on raw-shellfish service; crudo (think Italian sashimi) is incredibly fresh and of the highest quality; pastas like spaghetti with fresh chiles, mint, and a one-pound lobster are irresistible. And the whole fish for two, roasted in a sea-salt crust that's cracked tableside, is a riveting performance worthy of the theater-distr locale. • 402 W. 43rd St. (212-564-7272). (M–E)

Fleur de Sel
Chef Cyril Renaud wanted his first restaurant to b personal statement. So he hung his own watercolc painted the menu covers, and named the place af the highly prized, hand-harvested sea salt that's nat to Brittany, just like him. His $52 prix fixe menu small and changes daily, so there's no telling when y might see that lobster-avocado salad or venison fil with juniper berries and orange zest again. • 5 E. 2 St. (212-460-9100). (M–E)

★ Gnocco Caffe
Co-owner Pierluigi Palazzo named this East Villa café after the traditional Modenese snack of cris puffy fried dough, usually served with prosciutto Parma. But just to complicate matters, the gentl priced menu also offers two versions of gnocchetti (entirely different, equally delicious thing), plus we dressed, unusually fresh salads and an unassuming po tenderloin lavished with Parmigiano-Reggiano sha ings and an aged-balsamic emulsion. • 337 E. 10th (212-677-1913). (I)

★ Grand Sichuan Int'l Midtown
Each successive branch of this Szechuan chainlet h become progressively glitzier, culminating in this loc tion's chandeliers and wall to wall carpeting. What se arates this one from the kung pao pack is menu odc ties like the eight dishes inspired by a Chinese T show and a super-spicy category called "Mao's hon cooking." (The chairman liked his ch peppers—who knew?) • 745 Ninth Ave., 50th St. (212-582-2288). (I)

★ Guastavino's
They could serve tuna casserole ar you'd still be in awe of one of the mc spectacular restorations of a neglect urban space. Don't worry. It's ok to drc your jaw at the first sight of the toweri Alhambran arches. Everybody doe Though you may not be as impress with what's put in front of you, Guastiv no's is one of those massive undertakin that may take a long time to get thin right. In the meantime, enjoy tl scenery. • 409 E. 59th St. (212-980-245 (M–E)

★ Gyroland
Is it a slice joint, a Greek coffee shop neon sign store, or all of the abov While this brightly lit restaurant m suffer from a mild identity crisis, to between serving strictly Turkish fare ar appeasing the neighborhood clientele hospital workers and police cadets wi pizza and cheese-steak sandwiches, i also an undersung source for fresh ar delicious meze, doner kebab, kofte, lal macun, and pide. The cops don't kno what they're missing. • 351 Second Av nr. 20th St. (212-254-3200). (I)

ike
In some quarters—even in the out East Village, apparently—the phrase "American foo still evokes tuna casserole and TV dinners, three which are actually on the menu at this stylish throv back to the Eisenhower era. But so are latter-day r workings of deviled eggs, cornflake-crusted fish stick and lobster-and-spinach Thermidor cassolette, plus the classic cocktails you never imagined drinking wi Salisbury steak. • 103 Second Ave. (212-388-0388). (I–

Longacre Square
Before the paper of record set up shop nearby, th precinct used to be called Longacre Square. And th friendly steak-oriented restaurant plays up that ol time feeling with sepia-toned photos and modern r workings of good old edible Americana: prime dr aged sirloin, grilled lobster medallions, charred ve chop, a seafood "kettle," brimming with market shel fish. Plus a well-stocked cellar and thoughtful servic • 149 W. 46th St. (212-869-0600). (M–E)

★ Los Dos Molinos
Not since Drew flashed Dave has Manhattan witnesse a hotter display than the one at Los Dos Molinos—th

Photograph by Karen Pearsc

Jnion Square branch of the popular Arizona estaurant. The slow, satisfying burn begins with hips and fiery salsa and continues with familiar but uperlative Mexican-American fare. Entrées like iresistibly hot "adovada" pork ribs come with rice nd beans, a good homemade flour tortilla, and an pology in advance printed on the menu: "Sorry e do not provide a mild sauce, I do not know how o make 'mild,' " reads the chef's mission statement–indemnity clause. • 119 E. 18th St. (212-505-574). (I-M)

★ Lotus

Everything you wanted from a trendy club-bar-restaurant and less. Less attitude, less discomfort, less lbow contact, and less forgettable food. Lotus is a looming surprise. A slight kitchiness keeps it varm. Nice guy owners keep it friendly. And chef Richard Farnabe keeps you well fed. Think of the elvet rope outside as a ribbon. And Lotus as a gift. 409 W. 14th St. (212-243-4420). (M-E)

★ Lupa

We love this down-home Roman trattoria and not ust for Mario Batali's celebration of odd animal arts and Italian delicatessen, or for partner Joe Bastianich's bid to bring depth and finesse to a casual Village joint's wine service. We like the mood, the ood, and the gentle prices, but so do legions of uned-in New Yorkers. It's almost as tough a sanctum to crack as its pricier sibling, Babbo. • 170 Thompson St. (212-982-5089). (M)

★ Macelleria

Vegetarians beware: The name is Italian for "butcher shop," which the cozy back room still resembles, and the space used to be a meat locker. But there's nuch more to chef Jeffrey Edwards's menu than his dry-aged porterhouse for two. Whole peppercorns enliven Gorgonzola salad dressing. Zesty fennel ausages adorn a cannelini-bean stew. Delectable astas are served with hearty ragus, perfect for fall. • 48 Gansevoort St. (212-741-2555). (M)

★ Meigas

The décor is a little goofy and the location, on Hudson Street, in the Siberia of West SoHo, is a oust. But chef Luis Bollos's kitchen produces the best Spanish cuisine (Galician, actually) in town. In his hands, hefty dishes like braised oxtail croquettes and roast suckling pig appear light, almost candied. His gazpacho—a light confection, loaded with Maine lobster—makes the usual approximations of this dish look like crankcase oil. Trendy Iberian jellies and foams are mostly relegated to dessert, of which a wondrous chocolate layer ganache is best. • 350 Hudson St. (212-627-5800). (M-E)

★ Merge

Chef Sam DeMarco and his partners have a knack or creating neighborhood restaurants good enough to leave your neighborhood for. At Merge, n the former Indigo space, they've done it again. A cool, comfortable room, a friendly staff, a festive nood, signature "tiny tini" cocktails, and DeMarco's inspired multiculti neo-American cooking are an irresistable draw for locals as well as interlopers. Sunday evenings, "Gino's *Soprano* Style Dinner," a $25 prix fixe Italian-American feast, is an absolute steal. • 142 W. 10th St. (212-691-7757). (M) AE only.

Mirchi

A modern Indian restaurant that takes the street out of street food. The main attraction here is an open kitchen equipped with two *tawas*. The large saucer-shaped griddles that look like cast-iron gongs are used to prepare traditional Indian street food like tak-a-tak, a heavily spiced stir-fry of chopped vegetables and herbs, accessorized with chicken, lamb, or chicken liver, and served like tapas with little KFC-style dinner rolls. • 29 Seventh Ave. So. (212-414-0931). (I-M)

Morrell Wine Bar & Cafe

Pity the poor chef of a restaurant that sells Napa's renowned Dominus by the glass ($60). You might think the food can't stand a chance against a 2,000-bottle list and over a hundred by-the-glass selections. But Michael Haimowitz acquits himself well in this velvet-upholstered duplex across from the skating rink. Not to be outdone, his kitchen incor-

DELLA FEMINA RESTAURANT REVIEWS

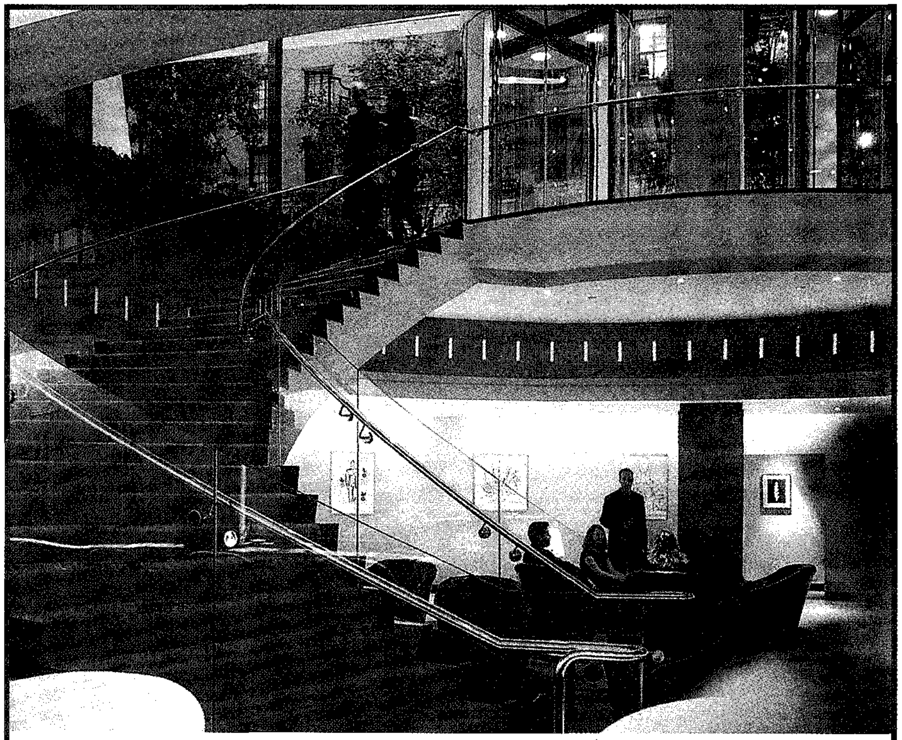
Hal Rubenstein, New York Magazine
"Kevin Penner's Day Boat Halibut in a delicious wild mushroom broth deserves to be a signature dish."

William Grimes, New York Times
"Everything clicked. Kevin Penner's 24 ounce rib-eye Cowboy Steak does all that a hunk of meat can do. Pastry Chef Karen DeMarco's steamed, lemon pudding is a life-changing experience."

Steve Cuozzo, New York Post
"It's perfect for a business lunch...Executive Chef Kevin Penner's langoustines are exquisite. Grilled loin of Colorado lamb with saffron risotto moves the earth."

Neal Travis, New York Post
"Della Femina is the hottest restaurant opening of the year."

Della Femina, 131 East 54th Street.
Lunch and dinner reservations required. Call 212.752.0111



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porates vino into the victuals, as in Barolo-braised lamb shank and a foie gras club with *porto* marmalade. • 1 Rockefeller Plaza (212-262-7700). (M–E)

Nick & Stef's Steakhouse
Los Angeles chef Joachim Splichal opened the first branch of this steakhouse in his hometown, knowing it might play even better in red-meat-loving Manhattan. There's twelve of everything, from salads and starters to potatoes and sauces. And where's the beef? Front and center, hung out to dry in a steel-and-glass aging chamber. • 9 Penn Plaza (212-563-4444). (M–E)

★ Orsay
The new version of *The Exorcist* isn't nearly as chilling as what Jean de Noyer must have gone through ridding the demons from this place. But from the ash of Mortimer's musty chicken hash, Orsay has risen, a brasserie swirling with seductive arches and good cheer, giving the upper east side the kind of french tickle it sorely needs. The former regulars never had it so good. Do you think they'd know the diff? • 1057 Lexington, at 75th St. (212-517-6400). (M)

★ Peasant
Peasant is exactly right. From it's stunningly backlit brick-walled kitchen that features only open fire cooking, to its incredibly appealing Tuscan menu, chef-owner Frank De Carlo has reason to bust his buttons every night, and you have almost too many reasons to loosen yours. • 194 Elizabeth St. (212-965-9511). (M)

★ Pipa
Doug Rodriguez has done Nuevo Latino at Patria and Chicama. Now he's tackling old-world Spanish (sort of). A field trip to Galicia yielded dozens of recipes for tapas, casseroles, soups, and flatbreads, all of which undergo subtle and delicious transformation in the chef's inventive hands. To wit: bocarones in escabeche with almond-crusted queso de cabra, crispy anchovies wrapped in sage leaves, and churros with warm chocolate dipping sauce for dessert. Much more radical is the conversion of the old Parlour Cafe into a seductive Iberian oasis with serrano ham hanging from beams and walls studded with enough shells to stock Sanibel Island. • 38 E. 19th St. (212-677-2233). (M)

Plate 347
We can imagine the astonished passerby's reaction: There's steak-frites in them thar hills, otherwise known as the bistro-deprived no-man's-land between Stuyvesant Square and Kips Bay. It's just what the neighborhood needed: mussels, warm goat-cheese salad, braised lamb shank, and an estimable bleu cheese burger. Bonus points: superfriendly service and a nice-sized garden. • 347 Second Ave., nr. 20th St. (212-388-0526). (I–M)

★ Rhône
The owners of this former meatpacking-district garage are erstwhile sommeliers with a thing for the Rhone Valley. If you've ever wondered about the difference between a Côte Rotie and a Côtes du Rhône-Villages, this is the place to find out, to the accompaniment of Gramercy Tavern alum Payson Dennis's sophisticated French country cooking. Splurge on lobster-truffle salad or sea bass served with oxtail ragout, or just mellow out at the enormous walnut bar or on a low-slung fifties-era Artifort chair in the lounge area. • 63 Gansevoort St. (212-367-8440). (M–E)

Rosa Mexicano at Lincoln Center
This hyperdesigned offshoot of Josefina Howard's upscale Mexican restaurant features a floating terazzo staircase ascending a dramatic 40-foot water wall. Not to be upstaged, the signature made-to-order guacamole has survived the commute, as have the pomegranate margaritas. And chef Sergio Remolina has made his own mark with assorted seviches and chile-spiced lamb shank steamed in parchment. • 61 Columbus Ave, at 62nd St. (212-977-7700). (M–E)

★ Rose Water
Chef-partner Neil O'Malley used to work at Oznot's Dish in Williamsburg, and it shows in his meze platter and lamb brik. But his tenure at Savoy, where he met partner John Tucker, is equally conspicuous. The menu's seasonal fixation guarantees a harvest of white-lightning corn and heirloom tomatoes in the summer. But the careful service, Brooklyn-mellow ambience, and sublime breaded pork chops are good year-round. • 787 Union St. (718-783-3800). (M)

Sabor
As the abiding popularity of tapas proves, grazing never goes out of style. Customize a tiered tray of pan-Latino nibbles like shrimp empanaditas, octopus salad, smoked-chicken croquettes, and tuna seviche and watch the Upper West Side roll by, in all its dog-walking, stroller-pushing glory. • 462 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 82nd St. (212-579-2929). (I–M)

★ A Salt & Battery
The folks from Tea & Sympathy have expanded their British empire with a fish-and-chips shop that literally reeks of authenticity. Aside from the main attraction, properly wrapped in British newspaper, there are mushy peas, pickled onions, Heinz baked beans, and the improbably edible deep-fried Mars Bars. Between orders, a relentlessly cheery staff spouts cockney slang while fry-chef Patsy Carroll—who used to cook in the British Merchant Navy and then, judging by his hoop earrings and Errol Flynn beard, turned pirate—cracks wise. • 112 Greenwich Ave. (212-691-2713). (I–M)

★ Sandro's
Has Roman chef Sandro Fioriti finally settled down? Those of us whose taste buds remember his signature crisp-fried baby artichokes, pan-fried calamari, and classic bucatini amatriciana from the original uptown Sandro's, all revived in this otherwise nondescript Chelsea storefront, can only hope. But judging by his recent restlessness, our advice is to get while the getting's good. • 200 Ninth Ave., nr. 22nd St. (212-633-8033). (M)

★ Sandwich Planet
Owner Will Brown got his start in the sandwich trade a dozen blocks north with his thriving Island Burgers and Shakes. At Planet, he reprises his boldly seasoned, lavishly garnished chicken churascos and hamburgers but also expands his Island oeuvre to include the kind of two-fisted retro sandwiches—Reubens, cheesesteaks, clubs, and croque-monsieurs—that have been displaced recently by wraps and other raised-pinky deviations. • 534 Ninth Ave., nr. 39th St. (212-273-9768). (I) ($)

★ Shelly's New York
The latest restaurant Shelly Fireman has created in his own image inhabits the space that was originally an Art Deco–era Horn & Hardart Automat. Only the assimilative Fireman would offer towering shellfish platters alongside newfangled chicken chow mein, barbecued ribs, and a burger audaciously crowned with seared foie gras and make it work. • 104 W. 57th St (212-245-2422). (M–E)

★ Strip House
The Glazier Group and chef David Walzog, the same team responsible for Tapika, Michael Jordan's, and our slightly lower life expectancy, take a Gallic approach to the New York steakhouse menu with starters like a five-ounce foie gras torchon and sides like goose-fat potatoes and truffled cream spinach. (Try ordering that at Gallagher's.) Meanwhile, designer David Rockwell has given the former Asti's space a saucy new look to go with its naughty new name. • 13 E. 12th St. (212-328-0000). (M–E)

Sushi Samba 7
Co-chefs Eiji Takase and Michael Cressotti bring their innovative Latino-Japanese seviches, samba rolls, and sashimi to a Sheridan Square offshoot big enough to handle the caipirinha-fueled overflow from their Gramercy flagship. There's a sunken cocktail lounge, an oyster bar, and a bold new Brazilian accent, especially in the churrasco a' Rio Grande: a feijoada-inspired fantasy of beef, pork, quail, sausage, rice, beans, greens, and farofa. • 87 Seventh Ave. So. (212-691-7885). (M)

Tao Asian Bistro
The team behind Rue 57 has transformed the old Palace movie house into a pan-Asian place where the terminally indecisive can share spicy lobster roll with black caviar, Shanghai-style soup dumplings, $10-an-ounce Kobe beef with wasabi, and Peking duck. Book the "sky box," a private dining room where the projectionist's booth used to be, and gaze down on the sixteen-foot Buddha, keeping the peace no doubt. • 42 E. 58th St. (212-888-2288). (M)

★ Tocqueville
At the loveliest new mom and pop shop in town, Marco Moreira and Jo-Ann Markovitzky have taken what they've learned from a decade of catering and added to it all the things they couldn't do in someone else's home to come up with a gently idiosyncratic nook that will take about twenty minutes to charm you. • 15 E. 15th St. (212-647-1515). (M–E)

★ Triomphe
Now that 44th Street west of Fifth is hotel row, the venerable Iroquois has emerged from its midlife stodge with a $13 million makeover and a pocket-size restaurant. Perhaps the prices could be sweeter, but there is refreshing pride in the serving crew, and much to savor on Steven Zobel's menu: tender braised rabbit, oysters simmered in Vermouth cream, sautéed chicken livers, and a commendably serious steak. • 49 W. 44th St. (212-453-4233). (M–E)

★ Vaux Bistro
At the more affordable, family-friendly reincarnation of what used to be Vaux, the menu reads rustic French, with daily specials like coq au vin, beef stew,

Opening

A Mushrooming Empire

Considering that it took Chanterelle's Karen and David Waltuck (pictured) two decades to open a second restaurant, it's no surprise that the debut of their sequel, **Le Zinc**, ran a year behind schedule. Now, finally, it's open—until 4 A.M. every day, perhaps to make up for lost time. With a few Asian-inflected exceptions, the menu reads like the homespun work of someone who's sown his wild *hautes*: assorted charcuterie, steak-frites Provençal fish stew, "Grandma's Szeged goulash." A burger, even. And nothing ove $19. (139 Duane Street; 212-513-0001.)

Photograph by Bruce Katz.

d bouillabaisse (all $16), plus all the bistro classics ’ve come to expect: Frisée salad with meaty lar-ons and hot garlic croutons. Potato-and-leek soup. rrine de canard. Mussels with addictive first-rate ites. And a chocolate-caramel bread pudding that ill make you regret finishing them. • 278 Fifth Ave., nr. t St. (718-499-1433). (M)

illage

fter years of pushing steak-frites at places like Odeon id Quatorze, Stephen Lyle has more than mastered e bistro idiom. To prove it, he opened this instantly ic West Village watering hole, which draws a fabu-us crowd tired of trying to remember the way to stis. Lyle weaves Asian and Mexican accents in dish- like tuna sashimi with grape leaves and oyster pan ast with chipotles; for more buttoned-down bistro stes there’s steak au poivre and potatoes sauteed in ck fat. • 62 W. 9th St. (212-505-3355). (M)

Vine

rt lunch commissary for well-to-do Wall Streeters, rt on-premise amenity for the folks who live in the ndos upstairs. Vine’s bull-market menu is big on afood like lobster pan roast with corn fritters and conut-curried grilled shrimp. There’s a quick-ser-ice café and grocery next door, and private party ace (plus extra lunch seating) downstairs in what sed to be, and still resembles, bank vaults. • 25 Broad t. (212-344-8463). (E)

Wallsé

ho knew veal goulash could be elegant? Kurt utenbrunner’s version is an artful mound of tender eat you almost regret toppling. And though dishes ke tafelspitz and wiener schnitzel seem like a culinary emoir, the guiding principle here is less goulash than reenmarket. Local farmers supply Guttenbrunner ith lemon thyme for his pike, heirloom tomatoes for is lamb salad, and the sweet strawberries that garnish is elderflower sorbet. Don’t miss the quark umplings. • 344 W. 11th St. (212-352-2300). (M–E)

anhattan

ower New York

Alfanoose

his spotless but otherwise nondescript falafel joint anked by $10 discount emporiums, makes the best—d neatest—falafel sandwich in town. Co-owner ouhamad Shami meticulously rolls his expertly sea-ned falafel and fresh condiments in an unusually in and pliant pita, like a burrito, so that all the har-onious components merge in every bite. It’s also a reat source for Middle Eastern appetizers, flatbreads well as suberb lamb or vegetarian kibbeh. • 150 Ful-n St. (212-349-3622). (I)

Aquagrill

ver since we tasted chef-owner Jeremy Marshall’s in-ired falafel-crusted salmon, the notion of a naked ink fillet has been tough to swallow. But despite the igh level of cooking, an offbeat and well-priced wine st, and unexpected grace notes like a welcoming *nuse-bouche* and complementary petits fours, it’s still a llicking neighborhood spot, where you can park ourself at the lively bar and watch the dexterous oys-r shucker in action. • 210 Spring St. (212-274-0505). M–E)

Balthazar

eith McNally has countless pacesetting restaurants his credit, but this is his masterpiece, an evocation of Paris brasserie that outglows anything within Brie-ssing distance of the Seine. Yet for all its visual im-act, Balthazar boasts equally compelling fare: tender raised lamb shoulder gets served over garganelli pas-, shepherd’s pie is made with duck, grilled tuna floats ver tomato-and-saffron coulis. And its oyster bar, ort ribs, bread, and service make you not give a amn whether you ever see the Eiffel Tower. 80 Spring St. (212-965-1414). (M)

Bo Ky

here are 30 soups at Bo-Ky. The best way to order em is by number. Don’t read closely to see what’s in hem. And don’t ask. You don’t want to know. Vhether the meat is pork chop or beef belly or chicken leg, just savor the smells wafting up from those bowls of Chinese, Cambodian and Vietnamese home cooking. It is tremendous soup, in size, flavor, and content. And the prices are pocket change. • 80 Bayard St. (212-406-2292). (I) ($)

★ Bouley Bakery

Love him or hate him, there’s no denying that the famously obstreperous David Bouley—bouncing between this kitchen and Danube—gets the job done. And his loyal clientele gratefully lap it up in the ethereal form of degustation menus revolving around superlative seasonal ingredients like skate steamed with fresh chamomile, say, or organic baby lamb with eggplant moussaka. • 120 W. Broadway (212-964-2525). (M–E)

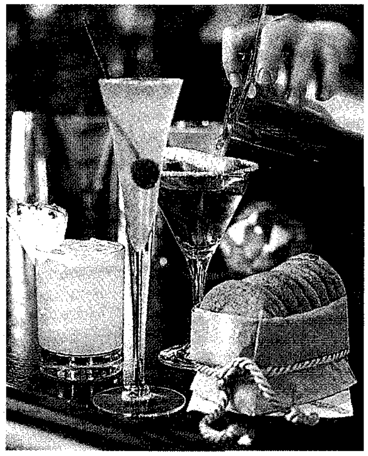
★ Chanterelle

The Waltucks, Karen and David, have specific ideas about how to make an evening unforgettable. The walls are without art. You will hear no music. Chairs are huge; plates are, too. The goal is to get you to concentrate solely on who you are with and what you are about to be presented—the stunning juxtapositions of David’s quail and star anise, lamb with cumin crust, crabs in ginger and strawberry mille-feuille with elderflower sorbet. • 2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (212-966-6960). (E)

Happening

Early Results

Talk about incentive. Instead of limiting itself to the lackluster rushed formula of appetizer, entrée, dessert, vamoose, the new $35 pretheater menu at **Beacon** throws in a complimentary cocktail (one of three named for current Broadway shows) and a bag of chocolate-chip cookies for intermission. Even if it’s a gimmick, it’s a good one: The midtown restaurant is as renowned for its expertly crafted drinks as for executive chef Waldy Malouf’s wood-fired cuisine, including choices like roasted oysters, baked penne and ricotta with wild mushrooms, and grilled Argentine rib eye. Get in the theatrical spirit with a tropical Dirty Blonde, a fruity Rocky Horror martini, or The Full Monty, a shameless concoction of vodka, gin, tequila, rum, Maraschino, and champagne. Available Monday through Friday from 5:30 P.M. to 6:15 P.M., for the month of December. (25 West 56th Street; 212-332-0500.)



★ City Hall

Chef-owner Henry Meer may be imagineering Old New York, with back-lit photos of bygone street life, but he can’t help refining it, too. The triple-tier “Chrysler” shellfish highrise is global gluttony via the jet stream. Chesapeake she-crab soup is creamy perfection. But go for the marvelous double steak on the bone, a behemoth served stunningly rare. • 131 Duane St. (212-227-7777). (M–E)

Divine Bar

The jewel-toned Financial District branch of the popular Turtle Bay bar and lounge serves the same extensive selection of wine, and a similar menu of appetizer-size plates. Selections include a barbecued-buffalo sandwich, shrimp satay with hoisin sauce, and a wild-mushroom quesadilla. • 55 Liberty St., second fl. (212-791-WINE). (I–M)

Gigino Trattoria

The rustic Italian fare in this barnlike TriBeCa trattoria ranges from brick-oven pizza and calzones to salmon with broccoli rabe. The casual atmosphere and inventive peasant food attract a loyal neighborhood following. • 323 Greenwich St. (212-431-1112). (M)

The Greatest Bar on Earth

This, the most casual component of the Windows on the World complex, has become a popular meeting spot for downtown office workers and, of course, tourists. The view, obviously, can’t be beat, and the snacky menu includes bites like fried calamari, barbecued ribs, and sushi. • 1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7000). (M)

Hudson River Club

From this Frank Lloyd Wright–ish dining room in the World Financial Center, you can see the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. But your attention may very well be diverted by the eye-catching American food—seafood sausage with white beans, potato-and-truffle ravioli, seared yellowfin tuna with caramelized foie gras—right in front of you. • 4 World Financial Ctr. (212-786-1500). (M–E)

★ The Mercer Kitchen

Within Christian Liagre’s conversion of a subterranean catacomb into a sultry, intimately shadowy quartet of fluid yet diverse sectors, executive chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten reveals how a few ingredients can create flavors that are lucid and compelling. Olive and radicchio join stewed rabbit, mint and coriander ring sea bass carpaccio, tomato soup is sparked by chili pepper and crabmeat. You may be sorry you never sprang for that loft on Spring. • 99 Prince St. (212-966-5454). (E)

Morton’s of Chicago

The second New York location of the national steakhouse chain. Portions are huge and the quality is consistent. And in case you hadn’t noticed, beef is back. Again. • 90 West St. (212-732-5665). (E) (M–E)

★ Nobu

There is not another experience like it in town. Nobu Matsuhisa is a chef of such wondrous originality that nothing on his menu is merely as it reads. Each dish reinvents your definition of what it should taste like. Teensy oysters make your eyes pop. Bonito soothes the throat like sable. Seaweed sparkles. The fake trees aren’t necessary. Two bites and you’re in Eden. • 105 Hudson St. (212-219-0500). (M–E)

Omen

Step off this quiet SoHo side street, and you’re suddenly transported to Kyoto—a feeling that’s reinforced by the traditional menu and decorative calligraphy and ceramics. • 113 Thompson St. (212-925-8923). (M–E) AE only.

★ Pearl Oyster Bar

Milos may have a fish display as big as this joint’s entire counter, but nothing can match the preparatory skills of the women who work the kitchen. This ain’t no Carnival Cruise. Keep your elbows in and your chin down, all the better to acknowledge a clam chowder revved up with smoky bacon, mussels in mustard cream, and a nutty grilled pompano in herbs. • 18 Cornelia St. (212-691-8211). (M)

★ 71 Clinton Fresh Food

Is there much call for Scottish salmon wrapped in av-

hotograph by Carina Salvi.

ocado at the intersection of Clinton and Rivington Streets? Well, yes, judging by the hungry crowd cooling its heels at the bar. Jean Georges alum Wylie Dufresne cooks seemingly complicated, easy-to-eat food like beer-braised short ribs geometrically sculpted into a perfect square; and parsley-root purée with a little parsley-root raft of lump crabmeat. (To eat, capsize and stir.) The chef's dad, a warm and punny presence on the floor, compiled the winning wine list. • 71 Clinton St. (212-614-6960). (M)

★ Wild Blue

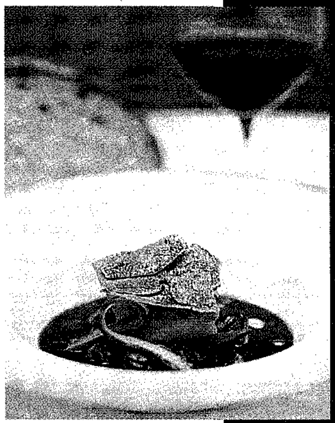
It sounds like a bar right outside the NASA compound, but in fact, it's an intimate, upretentious room that doesn't try to compete with the famous view. Chef Michael Lomonaco's menu is solid, superlative American, with a touch of the steak house in side dishes like creamed spinach and butternut-squash hash. Don't wait for a special occasion to take the 107-flight elevator ride. • 1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7107). (E)

Windows on the World

Yes, tourists love it. But Michael Lomanaco's sophisticated American food, including stout-braised Black Angus short ribs and lobster potpie with truffle cream manages to steal some attention away from the main attraction, that spectacular view of Manhattan Island. Be sure to take advantage of the restaurant's 60,000-bottle wine cellar. • 1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7000). (E)

★ Zoë

The tables here are always jumping, cranked up with the buzz of post-orgasmic shoppers and SoHo tourists savvy enough to find their way to some of the best fussy American food in New York. Chef Kevin Reilly, whose mission is to keep the prize-winning all-American wine list in mind as he designs the menu, is properly obsessed with seasonal ingredients. And just-baked cookies, still warm from the oven, evoke memories of Mom. • 90 Prince St. (212-966-6722). (M–E)



Below 14th Street, East

★ Bond Street

The crowd is too cool, the rooms too cozy, the waiters way too pretty. No way is this anywhere you're going to get chirashi worth much more than a can of Bumble Bee. Boy, are you about to be surprised. With food this fresh, original, and vibrantly spiced, the kitchen can easily take on most traditional midtown sushi houses and wouldn't have to walk out of a room backwards if Nobu's troops were in attendance. • 6 Bond St. (212-777-2500). (M–E)

★ Clementine

John Schenk whisked and chopped his way from Gotham Bar and Grill to West Broadway, mad.61, the Monkey Bar, and, finally, his own swank Greenwich Village corner, where he serves the soulful, sophisticated food that made him famous: sticky off-the-bone spare ribs with fried green tomatoes, luscious chilli-rubbed pork loin, and his signature cod on mashed potatoes. • 1 Fifth Ave. (212-253-0003). (M–E)

★ Gotham Bar & Grill

Alfred Portale created a restaurant where anyone, dressed any way, is invited with affability to partake of his talent for making American cuisine exciting and as easy to fathom as a burger and fries. Even when faced with soft-shell crabs or squab, say, topped with potato purée and fava beans for the first time, Gotham customers attack their plates with a fearlessness suited to Great Adventure. Actually, this is a great adventure. • 12 E. 12th St. (212-620-4020). (M–E)

★ I Coppi

If this trattoria has the homespun feeling of a family restaurant, it's because the husband-and-wife owners built much of it themselves. Bypass the good brick-oven pizza for a variation on it, the more unusual, and addictively crispy, cofaccini, flavored with garlic and olive oil and topped with artichokes. Risotto addicts will love farrotto, a version made with farro (spelt), prosciutto and winter squash. • 432 E. 9th St. (212-254-2263). (M)

★ Il Bagatto

Though so dark the menu can hardly be read and so deliriously energized you'd best be in the mood for a nonvintage bottle of red, Il Bagatto piles on super pastas, salads, and antipasti as full of sharp left hooks as that wine and as cheap as the hangover you'll have tomorrow. • 192 E. 2nd St. (212-228-0977). (I–M)

Osso Buco

Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. • 88 University Pl., nr. 11th St. (212-645-4525). Also, 1662 Third Ave., at 93rd St. (212-426-5422). (M)

Tasting

Cello's French executive chef, Laurent Tourondel, is giving his Italian colleagues a run for their money with his dazzling eight-course, $220 white-truffle dinner tasting. (For an additional $110 sommelier Olivier Zardoni will supply wines to match.) Winter vegetables and fish dominate the menu, to avoid overpowering those pricey fungi. An intense Jerusalem-artichoke velouté is topped with you-know-what; a vinaigrette of frogs' legs and haricots verts is set on creamy parsnip purée and sprinkled with the magic ingredient; but the pièce de résistance is butternut-squash open ravioli covered with Alba white truffles and surrounded with a rich port reduction. Make the most of the coming weeks, says Rosario Safina, of truffle distributor Urbani Truffles & Caviar. "It will be a limited, short season and expensive, as a result of the hot, dry summer in Italy followed by heavy rains." (Through December 8; 53 East 77th Street; 212-517-1200.)

GILLIAN DUFFY

★ Prune

There's not a wrinkled plum in sight at this Americ
bistro. But chef Gabrielle Hamilton's childhood nic
name indicates the sort of unpretentious home coo
ing at which she excels, a grab bag of eccentric, mu
ticultural influences that is, at heart, American—as a
place whose quirky bar menu includes Triscuits alon
side serrano ham with fresh figs must be. Minus t
traditional categories for appetizers, main courses, a
sides, the menu gives as prominent placement to ve
etables like creamed corn and roasted beets as to t
more entrée-ish capon on a savory garlic crouton,
the pastrami duck breast with a rye-flavored, frie
shallot omelet. • 54 E. 1st St. (212-677-6221). (M)

★ 2nd Avenue Deli

A recent facelift struck fear in the hearts of those wh
believe that a true pastrami sandwich must be a
thenticated by grimy formica and generations' wor
of atmospheric shabbiness. But so far, so good. Th
East Village landmark continues to draw dedicate
fressers with its great fries, chicken in the pot, th
near-lethal hush puppy (a frank in a potato knish
and the hard-boiled service. • 156 Second Ave. (21
677-0606). (I–M)

Below 14th Street, West

★ Babbo

Ever try goat cheese tortellini dusted in dried orang
and wild fennel pollen? Or spicy lamb sausage ro
manced by mint love letters and a paste of sweet pea
Get ready to crave them. Ingredients you didn't expe
or never heard of become unforgettable. Mario Batali
original yet airy Italian cooking will stun, fool, be
witch and ultimately obsess you. Just get it together t
make another reservation before you leave. • 110 W
verly Pl. (212-777-0303). (E)

★ Bar Pitti

Located on one of the few tracts of sidewalk actuall
wide enough to accommodate an outdoor café, Pitti
languid allure is something you normally get to enjo
only while carrying a passport. The kitchen produc
superlative Tuscan fare: grilled chicken with lemo
and endive, cool panzanella (bread salad), super liv
veneziana, and the best veal meatballs you've ever ha
• 268 Sixth Ave. (212-982-3300). (M) ($)

★ Da Silvano

Few of the fervent regulars here—including the city
media, fashion, and art-world elite—seem to recall a
Italian restaurant whose menu wasn't sopping in re
sauce before Da Silvano. The roasted standing duck
crackling, the lamb tender and moist, the artichok
salad as brash as the air around Montecatini. And n
an eggplant-parmigiana hero in sight. • 260 Sixth Ave
nr. Bleecker St. (212-982-2343). (M–E)

★ 'ino

Named for panino, this cozy nook excels at craftin
perfect Italian snacks to nibble with wine: crustle
tramezzini, pressed panini, and bruschetta, all on gre
bread and enlivened by zest
condiments. Supplement you
sandwich with a bowl
olives and a plate of chees
and keep the motif goin
with a Nutella panino fo
dessert. Best of all, it's open fo
business from early mornin
until after midnight. • 21 Bec
ford St. (212-989-5769). (I) ($)

Jekyll & Hyde

This boisterous Villag
restaurant bills itself as
"haunted explorers' club,
offering interactive enter
tainment and—so tha
famished explorers may kee
up their strength—a menu
American fare includin
"voodoo-spiced" Cajun steak
• 91 Seventh Ave. So. (212-98
7701). (I–M)

★ Pastis

Keith McNally's Pasti
looks more like a grande

Photographs by Carina Salv

ıcky Strike than a repro of the visually faultless
ılthazar, but not only does the slight downshifting
ake perfect sense; considering the tallow-rivulet-
›boned neighborhood, it also renders the new
ace instantly less imposing. Service is breezier, the
›wd more genially noisy, and the only thing disap-
›inting is that you don't live closer. • 9 Ninth Ave.
l2-929-4844). (M)

o Pepe

reliably festive spot for classic Mexican and Span-
ı fare, from tapas to paella Valenciana, with an en-
›sed sidewalk café and skylit garden room. • 168 W.
h St. (212-242-9338). (I–M)

illa Mosconi

:aditional Northern Italian home cooking in the
:art of Greenwich Village. A year-round backyard
ırden is available for private parties. • 69 Macdougal
. (212-673-0390). (M)

4th–42nd Streets, East Side

ambou

hint of the tropics on 14th Street: ambitiously
›uvelle renderings of Caribbean cuisine, like crab
ıkes with avocado and molasses or eggplant soup
ith coconut and curry amid a relaxing, palm-
onded bar and dining room. • 243 E. 14th St. (212-
58-0012). (M)

Campagna

he far-too-cautious interior is woefully inappro-
riate preparation for the whoops of joy that rou-
nely erupt when patrons sample Mark Strausman's
leefully game sense of Italian cuisine. The lobster
roth in his cacciucco is a blast. And his grandma's
sagna makes you sorry you never met the old girl.
24 E. 21st St. (212-460-0900). (E)

City Bakery

Jo one comes close to Maury Rubin at satisfying
ur grown-up snacking impulse. Heavenly tarts, per-
:ctly textured cookies and brownies, lusciously tart
:monades, ultra-thick and creamy hot chocolate—
ven homemade marshmallows—beckon irresistibly
om the counter. Pre-dessert, there are inspired
ındwiches like roasted pear and ricotta salata and
ıe only salad bar we obsess over. • 22 E. 17th St. (212-
56-1414). (I–M)

ommodore Grill at the Grand Hyatt Hotel

Commuters and business travelers can enter this for-
ıal hotel restaurant directly from Grand Central
erminal, for a quick drink in the cigar bar or a full
ıeal from the French-influenced American menu. •
2nd St. and Lexington Ave. (212-850-5999). (M–E)

Eleven Madison Park

Vhile this soaringly grand space in the MetLife lob-
y will never be a room for clandestine assignations,
ıe compensating grace of the staff, and simple but
ig-flavored dishes—capon stuffed with pistachio
ıd garlic, cod with sausage and mustard greens that
on't get lost in the landscape—make it a vibrant
lace to do business and an incredibly sensible
hoice for the family. • 11 Madison Ave. (212-889-
905). (E)

Gramercy Tavern

avern has become Danny Meyer's most appealing
:staurant, with a no reservations discount bar room
› make one churlish for not living or working near-
y. Chef Tom Colicchio pairs foods folks crave with
lements they usually don't. Roast sirloin of beef
omes with braised beef cheeks. Crabmeat fondue
ontains sea urchin. Not only does each gamble pay
ff, but so tickled are diners by their nascent daring
ıat on their next visit, damned if they don't demand
weetbreads with Jerusalem artichokes and roasted
od with brussels sprouts. • 42 E. 20th St. (212-477-
777). (M–E)

leartland Brewery

ı rollicking brewpub with a lively outdoor café. Ac-
ompany your choice of microbrew with crayfish-
hrimp gumbo, a smoked-pork-loin Reuben, or
teak au poivre. The beer-weary can sample from the
ity's largest selection of tequilas and single-malt
cotches. • 35 Union Square W. (212-645-3400). (I)

Madison Bistro

What every neighborhood needs: a casual spot for
rench classics like escargots, steak-frites, and bouillabaisse. Open-faced sandwiches called tartines are available at the bar, as are rustic French wines poured from imported oak barrels. • 238 Madison Ave., nr. 37th St. (212-447-1919). (M)

Meli Melo

This cheerful neighborhood spot offers a very reasonable fixed-price dinner—$31.50 for four courses. The seafood-heavy French menu has Asian and Mediterranean touches in dishes like seared tuna with baby bok choy and rack of lamb with couscous. • 110 Madison Ave., nr. 29th St. (212-686-5551). (M)

Metro Fish

Hearty fish dinners with all the fixin's in a nautical setting. Live lobsters, crabs, and other fresh seafood platters are simple, satisfying, and reminiscent of the sort of shore dinners served in seaside towns along the Northeast coast. • 8 E. 36th St. (212-683-6444). (M)

Metronome

This lofty Flatiron space is well suited to private functions, but even the lone diner will find the Deco design welcoming and the food—riffs on a Mediterranean theme like "pinchos" of vegetables with goat cheese, and za'atar-crusted rack of lamb—satisfying. Live jazz performed Wednesday through Saturday. • 915 Broadway, at 21st St. (212-505-7400). (M)

Mi

A talented team of cooks with impressive-sounding résumés (Mercer Kitchen, Hatsuhana) collaborate on a menu including sushi and sashimi, pad Thai, Malaysian spare ribs, and Korean bibimbob at this four-flavor pan-Asian restaurant. • 66 Madison Ave., nr. 27th St. (212-252-8888). (M–E)

★ Oyster Bar

Unperturbed by the arriviste competition in the food court next door, the jewel of the pre-renovation Terminal continues to serve superlative pan roasts and clam chowders, and an overwhelming assortment of East and West Coast oysters. The sprawling subterranean space has the hustle-bustle feel of a cafeteria, which its snaking counters resemble, but don't be fooled—you pay for the privilege of eating under that vaulted tile ceiling. • Grand Central Terminal, 42nd St. and Vanderbilt Ave. (212-490-6650). (M–E)

★ Patria

Zesty Latin American fare brought to you in a festive high-energy atmosphere. The three-story dining room is bright and airy by day and warm and earthy by night. And you won't find a Cuban sandwich like this anywhere else in New York. Or Havana, for that matter. • 250 Park Ave. So., nr. 20th St. (212-777-6211). (E)

Rossini's

This elegant split-level restaurant offers Northern Italian cuisine and live music nightly. Chef Gilberto specializes in seafood, and accomodates private parties. • 108 E. 38th St. (212-683-0135). (E)

★ Tabla

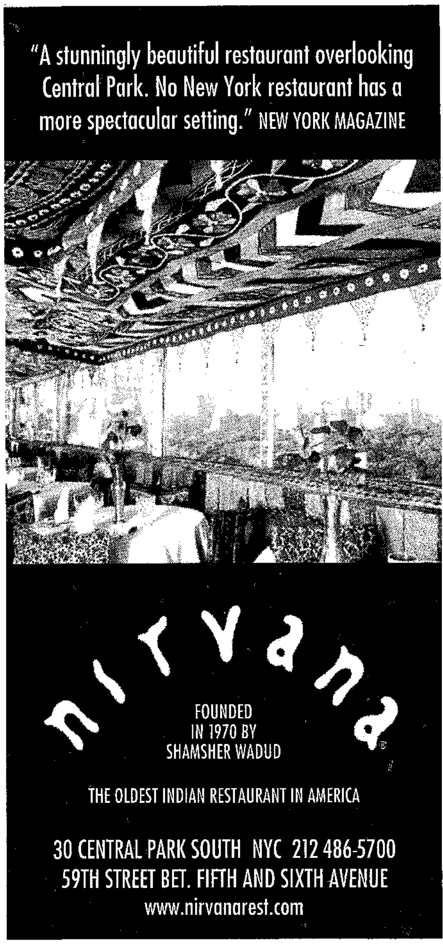
It's diminishing to categorize Floyd Cardoz's clean Goan-spiced Maine crab cake or his exquisite pairing of seared foie gras with a black-pepper-and-pear compote as nouvelle Delhi; he's gone and forged a deliriously satisfying union of this country's produce with the strong, heady spices and bewitchingly pungent condiments of his homeland. A less expensive menu at the Bread Bar downstairs aspires less to break new ground than to rekindle old taste memories—specifically Cardoz's, including his mom's recipe for beef assad, otherwise known as "Indian pot roast." • 11 Madison Ave. (212-889-0667). (M–E)

★ Union Pacific

Maybe if this were a less self-effacing restaurant, less content with its serenity and more intent on trumpeting its singularly inventive chef, Rocco DiSpirito, more people would know how successfully it rivals its real rivals. But that would miss the point. One has to admire the confidence to serve tuna with yuzu and fresh wasabi cool as a breezeway in Aruba, the brashness of sautéing skate in lime-pickled Swiss chard, and the chic to place a peck of pickled peppers round a rich and rousing pheasant without bellowing out "Ba da boom!!" nightly on the TV Food Network. • 111 E. 22nd St. (212-995-8500). (E)

★ Vatan

Love vegetarian Indian food but find the options overwhelming? We empathize: We're constantly mistaking the iddli for the dosa. Skip the menu hassle by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dining at this multitiered restaurant where, before you're seated, you'll be asked to remove your shoes. Everything on the prix fixe menu will be delivered to you in wave after wave of small bowls containing boldly spiced vegetables and grains. The only decision to make is which socks to wear. • 409 Third Ave., at 29th St. (212-689-5666). (I)

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar
This national chain invades Manhattan's freshly scrubbed and reinvented 42nd Street with an eager-to-please, affordable menu heavy on burgers, steak, and fajitas. • 234 W. 42nd St. (212-391-7414). (I–M)

Hush
Part bar, part nightclub, part restaurant. If you find that last part the most interesting, you'll appreciate the New American menu, served in shareable portions. • 17 W. 19th St. (212-989-4874). (I–M)

★ Mesa Grill
It's a clumsy room. But just keep your head down and don't stop eating—Bobby Flay's mastery of the spicier things in life keeps getting more polished and exciting. Ribs, tomato-tortilla soup, shrimp-and-corn tamale, blue-corn-crusted snapper, and pan-roasted rabbit—eat here, and you'll ramble on too—are just sensational. Flay's gonna rope you in, and leave you hog-tied and smiling. • 102 Fifth Ave. (212-807-7400). (E)

Ohm
An all-in-one entertainment center offering dinner, dancing, and the ever-popular lounging on velvet furniture. Plus an eclectic menu including sesame chicken tenders, Black Angus steak, and grilled salmon with lemon-caper beurre blanc. • 16 W. 22nd St. (212-229-2000). (M–E)

★ The Red Cat
Not every artist is starving, and the ones with bank accounts and hearty appetites would do well to make this their home away from home among the West Chelsea galleries. Hanging lanterns, barn siding, and artwork contribute to the funky décor, and the bar is the roomy, welcoming sort that solo diners find appealing. It's hard to find a clunker on the Med-American menu. The quick saute of zucchini with toasted almonds is something your mother would never have imagined—a vegetable that could spoil your appetite. • 227 Tenth Ave., nr. 23rd St. (212-242-1122). (M)

Simply Pasta
Perfectly situated for pretheater, this moderately priced Northern Italian restaurant offers antipasti, salads, pizzas, and pastas—over two dozen of them. • 120 W. 41st St. (212-391-0805). (I)

World Yacht Dining Cruises
Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—and sup on a selection from the "Best of New York" menu: featuring dishes based on recipes from the Sea Grill's Ed Brown and Aquavit's Marcus Samuelsson among others. Jacket required. • Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (212-630-8100). (E)

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

★ Della Femina
It might be easier to score a table here than at the infamous ad man's East Hampton address, but don't read too much into that: chef Kevin Penner's souped-up seasonal American menu tastes just as good in the 212 area code. There's a little country and a little city in his cold corn soup with black truffle coulis, and Dover sole "fish sticks" with a caviar remoulade. And you can almost smell Georgica beach in the lobster roll. • 131 E. 54th St. (212-752-0111). (E)

Divine Bar
This East Side establishment is all things to all people: a cigar bar, a wine bar, a tapas lounge, and a casual, couch-filled living room where local office workers can often be found unwinding. • 244 E. 51st St. (212-319-9463). (I–M)

Giambelli 50th Ristorante
Upscale Italian fare served in a warm and cozy atmosphere. The chef imports esoteric varieties of pasta from Italy to prepare his specialties; the fish and meat dishes are as carefully considered. • 46 E. 50th St. (212-688-2760). (M)

Jimmy Sung's
This elegant midtown restaurant serves classic Hunan cuisine and a sampling of dishes from other regions including sushi and sashimi. Private dining rooms are perfect for special occasions, business meetings, or mini-banquets. • 219 E. 44th St. (212-682-5678). (I–M)

★ Kuruma Zushi
Nobu and Bondst might draw celebrity sushi fans, but this is where you'll find the true fanatics, willing to squander their savings on superlatively fresh sushi and sashimi in nondescript surroundings one flight above a midtown side street. Cognoscenti put themselves and their taste buds in the nimble hands of the sushi chef, who amazes with imported treasures like Japanese aji, sea eel, and prawn-Kuruma ebi. • 7 E. 47th St. (212-317-2802). (E)

L'Actuel
Mosaic tiles, sand-blasted mirrors, beechwood accents, and mohair and suede upholstery lift this French restaurant located at the Kimberly out of hotel-restaurant anonymity. Equally enticing are Michelin-starred chef Jean-Yves Schillinger's grazing menu: foie gras with black cherries, marinated shrimp skewers, excellent tartes flambées, plus a full raw bar. • 145 E. 50th St. (212-583-0001). (M–E)

★ Le Cirque 2000
It took him almost a year to get the Byzantine elements of his gastronomic big top to snap into place, but Sirio Maccioni's Le Cirque 2000 is finally a startling production of urbane dexterity. But with chef Sotha Khunn and pastry chef Jacques Torres soon to take their simultaneous leaves, we'll have to wait and see whether ringmaster Maccioni can continue to dazzle us with this high-wire act. We're betting he can. • 455 Madison Ave. (212-303-7788). (E)

★ Le Périgord
A recent renovation did nothing to disguise the comforting, cosseting old-world feel of this Sutton Place landmark, where tuxedo'd captains oversee tableside service and remind you to order your Grand Marnier soufflé at the same time as your dinner. So it's surprising amidst all this tradition to find such modern food—fresh herbs, seasonal produce, and a flair for global flavors in dishes like herbal arctic char terrine with coconut emulsion and ginger oil. • 405 E. 52nd St. (212-755-6244). (E)

★ Lespinasse
Old-fashioned, luxurious hotel dining is not everyone's idea of fun these days—even with the possibility of a noontime flirtation and posh hotel rooms so handy. But chef Christian Delouvrier's cooking is anything but a bore. His butternut squash soup is revved up with chunks of duck breast and crusty foie gras, lamb rack and loin is touched with Chartreuse and coffee, and baby pig with cassoulet is carefully sauced to keep it from getting too rustically porky. With inventive cooking like this, even the recently redone room—so French and namby-pamby when it ought to be robber-baron American—seems pleasantly mellowed. • 2 E. 55th St., in the St. Regis Hotel (212-339-6719). (E)

★ Michael Jordan's The Steak House N.Y.C.
If you're looking for him, he ain't there. But if you've come for great beef, that's another story. A better slab of New York strip sirloin would be hard to find, no matter which train you board downstairs and no matter how far you travel. And you're surrounded by the most spectacular restoration this city has seen in years. It's almost as exciting as sitting courtside. • 23 Vanderbilt Ave., Grand Central Terminal (212-655-2300). (E)

Monkey Bar
A swanky renovation by David Rockwell and chef Andrew Chase's inspired New American menu have infused this midtown landmark with a new spirit. Plus there's nightly piano music and a special cocktail-hour canapé menu, to be enjoyed in the adjacent monkey-mural bar. • 60 E. 54th St. (212-838-2600). (E)

Morton's of Chicago
This midwestern import has taken Manhattan by storm, winning converts with its tender double porterhouse and men's club charm. Hard to believe it's a chain. • 551 Fifth Ave., at 45th St. (212-972-3315). (E)

Nino's Positano
An upscale Italian restaurant specializing in food fr the southern regions, Positano in particular. Pas range from the simple (fusilli with tomato-basil sau to the more complex (Cognac-infused seafood ris to), and main courses traverse similar territory. • 8 Second Ave., nr. 47th St. (212-355-5540). (M)

Oscar's
A contemporary American brasserie named for t Waldorf-Astoria's longtime maître d', Oscar Tschir creator of the Waldorf salad and veal Oscar. The me leans toward updated classics like yellowfin-tu tartare and smoked Hudson Valley foie gras with tr fled red-wine marmalade. • Lexington Ave. at 50th (212-872-4920). (M)

★ Peacock Alley
In this cushioned cocoon of a dining room off t lobby of the Waldorf Astoria, chef Laurent Gras–disciple of Alain Ducasse—offers diners a chance mix and match bite-size "courses" chosen from cat gories like Ocean and River, Field and Forest, a Farm. Or put yourself entirely in his hands with t seven-course "tête à tête" menu, each streamlined di composed of just two ingredients achieving, in Gra words, a "single clean note." • 301 Park Ave., in the W dorf-Astoria (212-872-4895). (E)

★ Sparks
We wouldn't be surprised to stumble upon Tony a Carmela Soprano celebrating an anniversary (or aquittal) on these saloon-like premises, where matte of-fact waiters wheel carts of precisely aged prin beef up to each table. Management takes person pride in the wine list, which classifies the volumino bottlings of Bordeaux by vintage. • 210 E. 46th St. (21 687-4855). (E)

★ Sushisay
An emergency room is more inviting; everyon greeted with the same clinical courtesy. Sushi prese tation is handsome and precise, but hardly breathtal ing. The taste, however, is something else. Sushisay h the cleanest, most seductive sliced raw fish in tow Go with someone who will help you ignore the se ting. Or just close your eyes. Don't worry. Your oth senses will be doing overtime. • 38 E. 51st St. (212-75 1780). (M–E)

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

Adrienne
Maybe you're not an out-of-towner on a spendi spree, but you can pretend to be at this posh hot restaurant overlooking a particularly swank stretch Fifth Avenue. Chef Oliver Dudler's modern Fren menu changes seasonally, and incorporates to-be-e pected luxury ingredients like lobster (in a trio soups), foie gras (with red-onion compote), a poached Dover sole. The $50 prix fixe dinner is a (re ative) steal. • 700 Fifth Ave., at 55th St., in the Peninsu (212-903-3918). (M–E)

★ Aquavit
Swedish chef Marcus Samuelsson puts his own uni hibited spin on Scandinavian food, which isn't to s you won't find herring, gravlax, and Swedish meatba on his menu. But for every expected Northern d light there's an innovation like tandoori-smoked ch with goat-cheese parfait and Osetra caviar. Those wh find the quasi-corporate dining room frosty can war up with an aquavit or dine upstairs in the cozier, le expensive café. • 13 W. 54th St. (212-307-7311). (M–E)

B. Smith's
Barbara Smith, who launched her culinary empi around the corner, is now ensconced on Restaura Row, where she feeds a theatergoing clientele h own version of global cuisine, from Thai-spiced win and Saigon shrimp rolls to the evocatively named "s slow roast dry rub buttah ribs." Live jazz Friday an Saturday night. • 320 W. 46th St. (212-315-1100). (M)

Ben Benson's Steak House
This rollicking steakhouse has long fed hordes of hur gry, beef-eating businessmen and the people who lov them. The festive air gets pretty thick by the ba where cigars prevail, but the dining room is devote entirely to the consumption of steakhouse standards.

3 W. 52nd St. (212-581-8888). (E)

ombay Palace
his newly refurbished, elegant Indian restaurant has een serving its refined versions of tandoori lobster, mb kandhari, and chicken kashmiri to a midtown fice crowd for years. Try the excellent Indian breads. 30 W. 52nd St. (212-541-7777). (M)

ûte
wide selection of champagnes—including a dozen ailable by the flute—and high-grade snack food like viar, smoked salmon, and Maison du Chocolat confections, make this former speakeasy a popular lateght destination and a perfect space for private pares. • 205 W. 54th St. (212-265-5169). (M–E)

Island Burgers and Shakes
his Hell's Kitchen storefront with a Southern Caliornia-vibe specializes in burgers and chicken sandiches, or churascos, in countless combinations and rved on great bread and with superior condiments. blackened churasco is almost painfully spicy and eeds only minor embellishment (some blue cheese, r avocado and Monterey jack) to gain admission ino our sandwich hall of fame. Great malteds douse the lames. • 766 Ninth Avenue, near 51st Street (212-307-394). (I) ($)

Judson Grill
t's a room so vast and vaulted you expect them to be nnouncing Trailways departures. But chef Bill elepan's cooking, propelled by a rousing level of conidence in bold flavors and pairings, matches the ravura of the room. With blithe deftness, he makes he familiar seem fresh. Crab cakes get dashed with emon verbena, chickpea soup tickles insidiously, and oin of pork with apple compote will leave you hapy. • 152 W. 52nd St. (212-582-5252). (E)

a Veranda
orthern Italian food. A popular theater district spot ffering generous portions of fish, seafood, veal chops, nd pasta and brunch on weekends. Free parking with dinner) from 5 P.M. to 1 A.M. • 163 W. 47th St. 212-391-0905). (M)

★ Le Bernardin
Criticizing Le Bernardin is like analyzing rainbows. Just try to describe the snapper in coconut milk or the black bass with truffles and celery root. No matter what you say, you sound like a fool. Submit to the sorcery of chef Eric Ripert, the bewitchery of owner and co-creator Maguy Le Coze, and experience the thrilling sensation of having everything that surrounds you perfect. • 155 W. 51st St. (212-489-1515). (E)

Les Pyrénées
French Provençal cuisine. Cassoulet from Toulouse is recommended, as well as filet mignon and frogs' legs. A rustic atmosphere. A lot of theatergoers. • 251 W. 51st St. (212-246-0044). (M)

★ Local
If your idea of Theater District dining is a lackluster prix fixe, this stylish newcomer and its focused, flavorful cooking will open your eyes—and with entrées venturing into the mid-thirty-dollar range—your wallet. Previously seen stirring the pots for Ron Perelman, chef Franklin Becker has the knack. We're particularly fond of his Vidalia onion and black olive tart, and knockout sea scallops riding a crab cake. • 224 W. 47th St. (212-921-2005). (M–E)

Martini's
Convenient for pre- and post-theater dining, with a buzzing sidewalk café and rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and, of course, multiple variations of the house drink. • 810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (212-767-1717). (M)

Pig and Whistle
A business clientele and a coming-and-going-to-the-theater crowd can find Irish specialties—both solid and liquid—here. • 165 W. 47th St. (212-302-0112). (M)

★ Redeye Grill
This place jumps late at night with live jazz, a cacophony of paintings by artists those latter-day Duveens Saatchi and Giuliani have yet to discover, and a fine smoked-fish platter, plus the town's quintessential cobb salad. • 888 Seventh Ave., at 56th St. (212-541-9000). (M–E)

Sitar Indian Cuisine
This casual restaurant attracts office workers and tourists, who come for house specialties like ginger chicken, lamb shaslik, onion bhajia, and the always-popular chicken tikka masala. • 58 W. 56th St. (212-581-1155). (I–M)

St. Andrews
In what might be New York's only full-fledged Scottish restaurant, the bartenders wear kilts, the scotch is single-malt, and the décor revolves around pictures of famous golf courses. The hearty steak-and-seafood menu features rack of lamb and brook trout stuffed with crabmeat and Irish oatmeal in a scotch-whiskey sauce. • 120 W. 44th St. (212-840-8413). (I–M)

The Supper Club
Dine, dance, and dress up at this Art Deco re-creation of a forties-era supper club, complete with a seventeen-piece big band and culinary classics like oysters Rockefeller, lobster thermidor, and Dover sole á la meunière. • 240 W. 47th St. (212-921-1940). (M–E)

Trattoria Dopo Teatro
Chef Andrea Pace is famous for his open ravioli of lobster and lamb, which appear on his Northern Italian menu alongside dishes like sautéed venison chops and risotto with baby shrimps. The dining room is decorated with Italian cinema stills and single-minded connoisseurs can pursue their passions in the wine room, the grappa room, or the cigar lounge. • 125 W. 44th St. (212-869-2849). (M)

Zanzibar
The crowd at this loungy Hell's Kitchen restaurant is as eclectic as the menu. African, Arabic, Asian, and Mediterranean touches appear in dishes like tuna and ginger ravioli; mussel soup with garlic, chickpeas, and cilantro; and a root vegetable and peanut stew served over rice. • 645 Ninth Ave; nr. 45th St. (212-957-9197). (M)

57th–60th Streets

Armani Café
This stylish midtown haven for weary shoppers on the sixth floor and rooftop terrace of the Emporio Armani boutique offers fresh salads, al dente pastas, sandwiches, and entrée specials like chicken breast with lentils. • 601 Madison Ave., nr. 57th St. (212-715-0500). (M)

Astra
The D&D Building's unofficial commissary has a stellar view, a menu devised by Charlie Palmer, and is open to the public for lunch only. Try grilled salmon niçoise, purée of wild mushrooms, and the Astra Blast—a dressed-to-kill BLT. • 979 Third Ave., nr. 58th St. (212-644-9394). (I–M)

★ Brooklyn Diner U.S.A.
If this is how owner Shelly Fireman chooses to memorialize the Brooklyn of his youth (which happens to have been spent in the Bronx), we won't complain. It's comfort-food heaven: big portions of exuberantly non-diet Americana like pigs in a blanket and a ham-flecked linguine baked in a too-rich-to-finish sauce that modestly bills itself as macaroni and cheese. • 212 West 57th Street (212-581-8900). (M)

★ Felidia
In between writing cookbooks and taping segments of "Lidia's Italian Table" for PBS, Lidia Bastianich, the matriarch of the clan responsible in part for Lupa, Esca, and Becco, oversees this elegant bastion of Italian cooking. But chef Fortunato Nicotra deserves credit for a new breath of energy at the range. Sauces are lighter, pastas still wonderful, and entrees get deftly tweaked. The wine list always impresses, and olive oil connoisseurs can spring for a $7 comparative tasting. • 243 E. 58th St. (212-758-1479). (E)

Jennifer's Restaurant
This casual Italian restaurant, a welcome refuge for tourists and local businesspeople, serves well-prepared classic Italian-American dishes, including shrimp stuffed with crabmeat, and linguini with whole lobster

Ask Gael

ly ears are ringing. Do they make it noisy on purpose?

I couldn't wait to score a table at **Peasant** after the early raves. Then an indignant call from my pal, the Sensitive Cassandra, reporting "noise so painful we walked out," changed my mind. So when an out-of-town foodie pal insists on trying it, I pack my earmuffs. We settle in, bottom landing hard, alas, on a cruel wooden pew and immediately tuck into a peppery soppressata pizza. Suddenly I realize . . . there is no din. Peasant got the message and padded the ceiling just a few months ago. I can hear the *sotto voce* gossip at the far end of our table. No need to shout—I can save my strength for making sure I get my share of the wonderfully chewy strozzapreti pasta squiggles in wild-boar ragu, the impeccably al dente langoustine-studded bucatini, and meltingly tender osso buco nested in a risottolike nest of farro. Out of the wood-burning inferno in the far corner come nicely charred sardines and tiny cuttlefish in terra-cotta as starters, then porchetta with polenta, and savory rabbit with white beans. All entrées are less than $25, and a $30 Dolcetto d'Alba makes a pleasing quaff. Okay, guys, now let's translate the menu for those of us who don't speak Italian. (194 Elizabeth Street; 212-965-9511.)

hotograph by Magdalena Caris.

in a garlicky tomato sauce. • 117 W. 58th St. (212-397-4256). (M)

★ March
If you're not in the mood, March can seem awfully precious. Your meal a succession of intricately thought-out small courses (either four or seven): Shards of grilled duck in a tart shower of lime and mango, for instance. Service that almost gets a tissue to you before you've sneezed. But should there come a time when you want to be surrounded by people who have every right to their effusive confidence, Wayne Nish and Joseph Scalice offer one of New York's most deliciously covert seductions. • 405 E. 58th St. (212-754-6272). (E)

Nirvana
The only Indian restaurant with a superb fifteenth-floor-view of Central Park and a varied menu of Bangladeshi and Pakistani specialties. Sample from a selection of curries, kormas, kababs, and vegetarian dishes. • 30 Central Park So. (212-486-5700). (M)

★ The Russian Tea Room
If he hasn't been lionized as a landmark himself, Warner LeRoy certainly deserves a Landmarks Preservation Commission crown for polishing up the fanciful red and green frippery of the Russian Tea Room with so little trauma. Whether you love or hate the trout swimming inside the acrylic bear, you can't fault dishes like borscht and Georgian-spiced seared halibut. • 150 W. 57th St. (212-974-2111). (E)

★ San Domenico
You won't find a more elegant big-deal Italian restaurant in New York. We treasure it for the luxurious space at and between tables, the cool coach-leather chairs, the clockwork service, and the refinement of the risottos, pastas, fish, and game. Owner Tony May has an uncompromising passion for the highest quality Italian ingredients and devotedness to classical technique that rivals any Michelin-starred chef, and it shows. • 240 Central Park So. (212-265-5959). (E)

Above 60th Street, East Side

Cafe Crocodile
A French Mediterranean bistro with dishes ranging from Provençal to Moroccan in an intimate, romantic townhouse crowded with flowers and oil paintings. Attracts serious foodies from the neighborhood and the occasional gaggle of well-informed Euro-tourists. • 354 E. 74th St. (212-249-6619). (M)

★ Cello
Owner Jacques Le Magueresse has chosen every appointment (Bernaudaud dishes, monochromatic flowers, and almost reflective mahogany walls) to serve as an elegant yet unobtrusive backdrop for the whisper-light delicacies that emerge from chef Laurent Tourondel's kitchen. Rougets glistening like bloodstones in a raw tomato sauce. Turbot that melts like cotton candy. And frozen crême bruleé that must have the Häagen-Dazs people turning like dervishes. • 53 E. 77th St. (212-517-1200). (E)

★ Daniel
Daniel Boulud is blessed with the gift of being able to add familiar flavors into the most stunning of summations, like walnuts and foie gras that intensify the lush gaminess of quail. He routinely triumphs in why-didn't-anyone-else-think-of-it feats like finding what envelopes sweetbreads to leave you without that heady aftertaste—suspending them between a rhubarb glaze and spinach purée. And his chocolate bombe soars like no other. • 60 E. 65th St. (212-288-0033). (E)

★ Eli's Restaurant
It's downright soothing to wander into Eli's Restaurant, spruced up and downlit for dinner, and relax over Scott Bieber's straightaway cooking. His Nantucket bay scallops in butter come from an era before we ever dreamed of eating seaweed. We're not sure why several slices of Molino tomatoes, even glistening with Laudemio olive oil and fleur de sel, should cost $8 but hey, this is Eli Zabar, the man who taught us no price is too much for the perfect raspberry. • 1411 Third Ave., at 80th St. (212-717-8100). (E)

★ Etats-Unis
Behold a small, square, dramatic, and spartan room, devoid of any table-hopping, cell phones, or change-of-life blondes. The daily-changing menu choices are spare, but consistent in their bent towards slow roasting, robust sauces, and great vegetables. Nota bene—beware the local intellectuals who cleave to this place. "We're all living in the world's history," one actually said one night. Maybe it would've sounded better spoken into a cell phone. • 242 E. 81st St. (212-517-8826). (E)

★ Fireman's of Brooklyn
Shelly Fireman, the man behind midtown's nostalgic Brooklyn Diner, expands on his outer-borough fantasy with this seafood house, which features a shrimp, oyster, and chowder bar; market-fresh fish; and something called the "lobster shanty" (an outsize beauty buried under a hill of fried onion ribbons). Landlubbers go for "Bubba Fireman's chicken." • 1081 Third Ave., nr. 64th St. (212-838-7570). (M)

Hi-Life Restaurant & Lounge
A seamless fusion of a steakhouse and an ocean-liner lounge. The dining room's round booths are so big and luxurious they seem structural. This place has two gears: As the evening wears on, the young-moms-with-strollers eatery gives way to an East Side hot spot complete with a sushi bar. • 1340 First Ave., at 72nd St. (212-249-3600). (M)

★ JoJo
Before there was Jean Georges, there was JoJo, the place where Jean-Georges Vongerichten stunned gourmands with his herbal essences, vegetable sauces, and gossamer desserts. A ravishing goat-cheese-and-potato terrine in arugula juice. Fruit soups exploding with penny-bright flavor. Sit upstairs where it's more intimate and less conspicuous to dip your fingers into the sauce oozing from the center of his lascivious Valrhona cake. • 160 E. 64th St. (212-223-5656). (E)

Nino's
Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. • 1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (212-988-0002). (E)

★ Payard Patisserie & Bistro
You'll never shiver and blush the way Francois Payard's Nôtre Dame, Fontainbleau, St.-Honoré, or devilish chocolate tart make you when they hijack your taste buds to a place they've never been and will forever yearn to return. If all this sweetness weren't enough, Payard's chef Philippe Bertineau concocts first and second courses that match François's touted thirds. • 1032 Lexington Ave. (212-717-5252). (M–E)

Pig Heaven
A sleek change in décor has given this Chinese-American specializing in freshly prepared Cantonese and Sichuan classics a second wind. Favorites include the scallion pancakes, Peking duck, panfried dumplings, and, of course, the porcine specialties. • 1540 Second Ave., nr. 80th St. (212-744-4333). (M)

Sel & Poivre
Stanching the flow downtown for bistro fare. Regulars find what they are looking for in this quaint, countrified space. The country-French cuisine includes steak au poivre, bouillabaisse, and roasted chicken, and the prix fixe menus are a bargain. • 853 Lexington Ave., nr. 64th St. (212-517-5780). (M)

Seventh Regiment Mess
Who knew that you can actually eat dinner on the fourth floor of the Armory, a brick-walled fortress, originally decorated by Louis Comfort Tiffany and Stanford White? A hunting-lodge motif provides the proper historical backdrop for a moderately priced menu of pastas, salads, sautéed chicken, rack of lamb, and a sandwich quaintly called the "dagwood." • 643 Park Ave., at 66th St. (212-744-4107). (I–M)

Trata
With its fish-market display, its Greek spreads and salads, and its simply grilled seafood, this bustling Upper East Side sideline of the Patsy's pizza chain offers an affordable, less dramatic alternative to Estiatorio Milos, where the chef used to work. • 1331 Second Ave., nr. 70th St. (212-535-3800). (M)

Via Quadronno
A traditional Milanese panini bar run by the same people who operate Sant Ambroeus, a happy coincidence when it comes time to order dessert. In addition to offering sandwiches, the menu lists salads, carpaccio, lasagna, and fondue (the latter available o ly at dinner). As at any self-respecting paninoteca, wi and espresso are the featured beverages. • 25 E. 73rd (212-650-9880). (M)

Above 60th Street, West Side

★ Avenue Bistro
Linger over a scrambled-eggs-and-apple-panca breakfast until three in the afternoon, or come for di ner, when the pastry counter becomes a wine bar, v tive candles flicker on tiny tabletops, and the me shifts to sophisticated French-American fare li sweetbreads, foie gras terrine, and crisp roast ducklin Chef-owner Scott Campbell is justly proud of creamy Valrhona hot chocolate, which he freezes in ice cream in the summer, and he's shrewdly respond to the neighborhood's demographics by concocting own line of baby food, made from all-natural ingre ents. • 520 Columbus Ave., at 85th St. (212-579-3194). (

Hi-Life Bar & Grill
Big-city brasserie with retro feel—*and* a sushi b During the week, an overstuffed banquette and t oversize goldfish tanks provide a cozy refuge for t neighborhood. Fine food that ranges from steam dumplings to strawberry sundaes. After dinner eve weekend, a D.J. tilts the place toward a party. • 477 An sterdam Ave., at 83rd St. (212-787-7199). (M)

★ Jean Georges
Nothing and no one at Jean Georges steals cent stage from the wondrous creations of its extraordina chef, Jean-Georges Vongerichten. If you're okay wit such divine supplication, prepare to be open-mouthe whenever you're not chewing. Nothing you e counter will fail to dazzle, from the simplest dish of a paragus and morels au jus to the unexpected comb of sweetbreads en cocotte with ginger and licorice. • Central Park West (212-299-3900). (E)

La Vela
A comfortable, unpretentious spot for Northern Ita ian food. Worth sampling are the zuppa di pesce, t risotto, and the wild-mushroom, black-olive, an goat-cheese pasta. • 373 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 77th S (212-877-7818). (I)

★ Ruby Foo's
In what might be Auntie Mame's duplex during h high mah-jongg period, the black-bean sauce is v brant and the wok steamed lobster is worth its weig in jade. And regardless of where you sit, you have t walk down the Mamescent staircase at least onc Screaming "Live! Live! Live!" is optional. • 2182 Broa way, at 77th St. (212-724-6700). (M)

Sapphire Indian Cuisine
A couple of partners from TriBeCa's Salaam Bomb have brought regional Indian cuisine to Columb Circle. The prix fixe lunch buffet is a bargain, and a the trendy territories (Goa, Gujarat) are well-repr sented. • 1845 Broadway, nr. 61st St. (212-245-4444). (

Brooklyn

Casa Pepe
Mexican and Spanish fare meld in this elegant restau rant, with garden dining in fine weather and a fir place. The seafood-heavy menu finds best expressio in the zarzuela de mariscos, paella marinera, and tac Vera Cruz. • 114 Bay Ridge Ave. (718-833-8865). (M)

★ Peter Luger
Steak for one, steak for two, steak for four, an creamed spinach. Apply for your own Peter Luge credit card, or bring cash. • 178 Broadway, at Bedfor Ave. (718-387-7400). (E) ($)

Queens

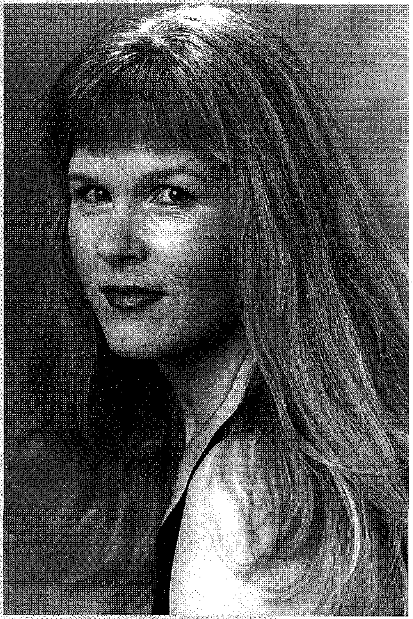
Water's Edge
Every table has a view of Manhattan. A quiet and el egant space to partake of fancy American fare lik roasted-chestnut soup and red snapper poached i orange-saffron infusion with baby fennel an chervil. Jacket required. • 44th Dr. at the East Rive (718-482-0033). (E)

InConcert

Edited by Tara Pepper

Preview

vant-Guardian



Not many pianists can phone a composer to query a suspect F-sharp, but **Sarah Cahill**'s fascination with twentieth-century music afforded her just that luxury (and it turned out that it should have been an F-natural). When she was still a student at the San Francisco Conservatory in 1977, John Adams dedicated *China Gates* to her, and she has since made a career of delving into neglected corners of the American avant-garde. "There are depositories, libraries, people who knew these composers and have the original manuscripts—there's so much to uncover," she explains over the phone from Bard College. "It's tremendously exciting to have that connection and get to know the composer as a real person." On the program for her December 2 concert at Columbia's Miller Theatre are works by Leo Ornstein, who performed the American premieres of works by Ravel and Debussy in the twenties, and George Antheil, who claimed in his autobiography, *Bad Boy of Music,* that after a girlfriend's mother dragged her to Europe to separate them, he could think of no way to follow her other than by training as a concert pianist. Antheil eventually moved to Hollywood, where he wrote film scores and a romantic-advice column and invented futuristic gadgets with Hedy Lamarr, while Ornstein increasingly cut himself off from the world. "They were both called Futurists in the twenties—they provoked very strong reactions," Cahill explains. "When he was in his eighties, Ornstein wrote the most sensuous, captivating music I have heard." Ornstein will celebrate his 108th birthday watching Cahill's performance by Webcast from his home in Wisconsin. (See "Classical Music.") T.P.

lassical Music

arl Wild, piano
elebrates his 85th birthday performing works by rahms, Debussy, and Liszt. 11/29 at 8. • Carnegie all, Seventh Ave. and 57th St. (212-247-7800); 0-$68.

ne Eaglen, soprano
lakes her New York recital debut with music by ellini, Frank Bridge, and others in the "Art of the ong" series. 11/29 at 8. • Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center 12-721-6500); $35.

a Capo Chamber Players
remiere new chamber works from Australia, inuding Nigel Westlake's *Refractions at Summer loud Bay*. 12/1 at 8. • Washington Square United ethodist Church, 135 West 4th St., $15 at the door.

he Chamber Music Society
onor American composers David Diamond and ucia Dlugoszewski with a program of their works d music by Mozart. 12/1 at 8 and 12/3 at 5. • Ale Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $27.50 d $37.50.

Distinguished Artists"
adja Salerno-Sonnenberg (violin), and Anne-Marie cDermott (piano) play Stravinsky, Brahms, and ershwin. 12/2 at 8. • 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. 12-996-1100); $20–$30.

Sarah Cahill, piano
Celebrates the 108th birthday of Leo Ornstein with works including *Suicide in an Airplane,* and the centennial of his protegée George Antheil. • Miller Theatre at Columbia University, 2960 Broadway, at 116th St. (212-854-7799); $17.

"St. Nicholas Day Festival"
The Bronx Arts Ensemble present a setting of old Dutch carols by Jack Gale. 12/2 -3 at 1 and 3. • Van Cortlandt House Museum, Broadway near West 246th St., (718-601-7399); free tickets must be ordered in advance.

The Choral Symphony Society
Present Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* with the New York Cantata Singers. 12/3 at 7. • Christ & St. Stephen's Church, 120 West 69th St., (212-864-7541); $20.

The Jacques Thibaud String Trio
Perform works by Beethoven and Dohnanyi and join the audience afterwards for coffee. 12/3 at 11. • Walter Reade Theater, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $18.

The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment
The period-instrument ensemble presents an all-Vivaldi program as part of the "Great Performers" series.12/3 at 2. • Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $40.

Jimmy Heath, saxophone
"If you know Jimmy Heath, you know Bop," said Dizzy Gillespie of the creator of Bebop, who revisits the style with trombonist Slide Hampton and others. 12/4 at 8. • Merkin Concert Hall at the Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. (212-501-3330); $20 single tickets, subscription to the *Jazz Breakthroughs* series, $32.

Orpheus Chamber Orchestra
Is joined by James Galway for Fauré's *Fantasie* for flute and chamber orchestra and Ibert's Flute Concerto in a program that also includes Bizet's Symphony in C Major. 12/4 at 8. • Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. and 57th St. (212-247-7800); $19–$79.

Opera

The Metropolitan Opera
La Bohème continues until 12/5; *Der Rosenkavalier* until 12/14. *Der Fliegende Holländer* is performed until 12/20 and *Fidelio* will run into the new year. Call for program details and times, or visit www.metopera.org. • The Metropolitan Opera, Lincoln Center (212-362-6000); $18–$180.

The Afro-Asian Music Ensemble
Premieres Fred Ho's *Warrior Sisters,* exploring traditional roles of women in Western opera through Chinese heroic myths, and West African praise epics. Through 12/2 at 8. • The Kitchen, 512 West 19th St. (212-255-5793); $20.

Dance

Alvin Ailey
The 40th anniversary of their signature piece, *Revelations,* is celebrated at the opening-night gala, 11/29 at 8. A season of premieres begins with Alonzo King's *Following the Subtle Current Upstream*. 12/1 at 8. • City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212); opening night, $25–$2,000, all other performances, $20–$75.

Eiko & Koma
The Japanese-born dancers premiere *When Nights Were Dark*. 11/29–12/2 at 7:30, 12/3 at 3. • BAM Harvey Theater, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn (718-636-4100); $25–$40.

Sydney Dance Company
Artistic director Graeme Murphy presents his *Salome* and *Air and Other Forces* until 12/3, Tuesday through Saturday at 8, weekend matinees at 2. • Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. (212-242-0800); $35.

"Men's Stories"
Lar Lubovitch premieres his new dance for nine men with music by Scott Marshall. Through 12/8, call for times. • Orensanz Center for the Arts, 172 Norfolk St. (212-279-4200); $36.

"Neither"
Doug Varone and dancers premiere his new work set to music by Michael Nyman and Bach. Through 12/17, Tuesday through Saturday at 7:30 and 9:30, Sundays at 6:30 and 8:30. • The Lower East Side Tenement Museum, 97 Orchard St. (800-965-4827); $40.

New York City Ballet
Balanchine's *Nutcracker* continues until 12/31. Please call for times or log on to www.nycballet.com. • New York State Theater, Lincoln Center (212-307-4100); $16–$85.

Ground Rules

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public outdoor performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

otograph by David Casteel.

cue Nightlife

Edited by Ethan Brow

Concerts

Aaron Carter
11/28 at 8: • Community Theater, Morristown, N.J. (212-307-7171); $25.

Faith Hill and Tim McGraw
11/30 at 8: • Continental Airlines Arena, East Rutherford, N.J. (212-307-7171); $59.50, $49.50, $39.50.

Insane Clown Posse
12/2 at 8: With Suicidal Tendencies, Nashville Pussy, and Confrontation Camp. • Hammerstein Ballroom, 311 W. 34th St. (212-307-7171); $25.

k.d. lang
12/2 at 8: • Beacon Theatre, 74th St. at B'way (212-307-7171); $65, $45.

Orgy
11/27 at 8: • Hammerstein Ballroom, 311 W. 34th St. (212-307-7171); $19, $17.50 advance.

Small Stages

Arlene Grocery
11/27: Shameless; Erik Lieblein. 11/28: Sound of Monday; Plastique. 11/29: Karen Kuhl; Swati. 11/30: Very Special; All Night Long. • 95 Stanton St. (212-358-1633). $.

B.B. King Blues Club & Grill
11/27–11/28: A Sawyer Brown Christmas. 11/29: The G. E. Smith Band. 11/30: Oumou Sangare. 12/4–12/5: Kathy Mattea. • 243 W. 42nd St., (212-997-4144).

Bottom Line
11/30: Lina Koutrakos; Marc Black. 12/2: David Johansen and the Harry Smiths. 12/4: Phil Roy; Nina Storey. • 15 W. 4th St. (212-228-6300).

Bowery Ballroom
11/28: Everlast. 11/30: They Might Be Giants. 12/1–12/2: Buzzcocks. • 6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111).

Chicago B.L.U.E.S.
11/30: Dave Keyes. 12/1–12/2: Levon Helm. • 73 Eighth Ave., bet. 13th and 14th Sts. (212-924-9755). $.

Fez
Thursdays: Mingus Big Band. Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays: Kiki & Herb: "Playing For Time." • Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (212-533-2680).

Irving Plaza
11/27–11/28: Type O Negative. 11/29: Shane MacGowan. 12/1–12/2: The Saw Doctors. • 17 Irving Pl. (212-777-6800).

Joe's Pub
An intimate space that boasts the most eclectic booking in town. Expect everything from torch singers to underground hip-hoppers to New Age composers. Mondays: "Benefit," a downtown music revue. Tuesdays: "Original Roses" with D.J. Beverly Bond. Wednesdays: Reggae music with "Fever." Thursdays: Editors, scene-makers, and boldface names take their turns spinning their favorite records with the "Personality D.J. Series." Sundays: the deep-house oriented "Love Bazaar" with D.J. MKL. 12/1–12/3: Darlene Love: "Love for the Holidays." 12/3: "Infinite Joy: Songs of William Finn." 12/4: B.D. Wong. • 425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).

Knitting Factory
11/27: Yazbek. 11/30: The Go-Betweens. 12/1: Butch Morris. 12/2: James Blood Ulmer and Odyssey. 12/3: Bitch and Animal. • 74 Leonard St. (212-219-3055). $.

Makor
11/28: "Local Bands Night" featuring: Philip Foxman, Dina Fanai, Leif Arntzen, and Vered & The Robbery. 11/29: DJ Lux. 11/30: Patti Rothberg; Bari Koral. 12/2: Fabio Morgera; Actual Proof. 12/3: Ted Rosenthal Trio. • 35 West 67 St. (212-601-1000).

Manitoba's
Mondays: Beat Rodeo. Tuesdays in November: "Ha core" with Mistress Formika. Fridays: Adam Rc 11/29: True Love; Richard Lloyd. 11/30: The Den lition String Band. • 99 Ave. B, bet. Sixth and Seventh (212-982-2511).

Maxwell's
11/28: The Buzzcocks. 11/29: Mean Red Spid 12/1: The Pietasters. 12/2: Amy Rigby. • 1039 Wa ington St., Hoboken, N.J. (201-653-1703).

Mercury Lounge
11/27: Extra Virgin. 11/28: Supple. 11/29: Im Coppola. 11/30: Knoxville Girls; The Sadies. 12 Friendship Society; Teen Beaters. 12/2: Eddie Fr Ohio. 12/3: The Moldy Peaches; Dufus. 12/4: Vane Carlton. • 217 E. Houston St. (212-260-4700).

Rodeo Bar
11/27: The Moonlighters. 11/28: Western Carav 11/29: Tandy. 11/30: Jimmy Nations. • 375 Third Ave 27th St. (212-683-6500).

S.O.B.'s
11/27: Grupo Niche; Guayacan. 11/28: Major Figg Outsiders; No Question. • 204 Varick St. (212-2 4940).

The Supper Club
A large, grand ballroom with a starry ce ing and challenging acoustics. Every F day and Saturday evening at 8: "Tropica Fever." • 240 W. 47th St. (212-921-1940).

The Village Underground
Former Tramps booker Steve Weitzma brings his eclectic sensibility to a new smoke-free—club in the West Villa 11/30: John Carlin; Graham Parker. • 1 W. 3rd St. (212-777-7745).

Wetlands
Mondays: D.J. Logic. Tuesdays: Illumina Thursdays: Groove Collective. 11/ Rana' Nex Tribe. 11/29: Fatman Scoo Bobbito. 11/30–12/2: Steve Kimo Band. 12/3: Wild Magnolias. • 161 Huds St. (212-386-3600) $.

Clubs

Centro-Fly
Once uncomfortably dominated by t bottle-service set, Centro-Fly has n achieved a near perfect mix of W Streeters with loosened ties, DJ bag-c rying dance-music fanatics, and tracksu ed deep-house heads. Thursdays: "Su liminal Sessions" with D.J. Erick Mori and big-name special guests. The seco Friday of every month: house pa "N'Ice." Third Friday of every month: House pa "Con-fu-sion" with talented out of town D.J.'s li Chicago's Pierre. Saturdays: Energetic house and b beat with "Plant." The last Saturday of every mon Plant presents D.J.'s Junior Sanchez and Rog Sanchez (no relation), two of New York house musi finest. • 45 W. 21st St. (212-803-7859).

Cheetah
A jungle-themed club with a spacious dance flo and a small, yet powerful sound system. Thursda "Clique," where the socialite set grooves to hip-h beats. Fridays: "GBH" ("Great British House"), party that, thanks to great guests like To Humphries, Ashley Beedle, and the DJs of "M Moneypenny's," has quietly become one of the b nights out in the city. Saturdays: thumping trib house and live percussionists at "Cherchez Femme." Sundays: Nicky Siano of "Twelve Wes joins "Boys Nite" D.J. Merritt for "Mardi Gras." T emphasis will be on deep house and garage classi • 12 W. 21st St. (212-206-7770).

Tribute

Guitar God

The story of **Django Reinhardt** (pictured) has all the clichés and trappings of a tale of breakthrough genius. Born to a poor Gypsy family in Belgium in 1910, the guitarist went on to define a furious, passionate style of swing called "Le Jazz Hot" in the thirties, despite a lack of musical training and an accident that injured two of his fingers. (Woody Allen's *Sweet and Lowdown*, starring Sean Penn as well as real jazz critics like Nat Hentoff, is one long paean to Reinhardt's greatness.) "He channeled all the recklessness, the desperation and passion in his life, into his music," says Pat Philips, co-producer of the "Django Reinhardt Festival," at Birdland November 29 through December 2. The program—surprisingly, the first Reinhardt tribute festival in the United States—has well-known jazz violinist Regina Carter topping the bill and includes a 20-year-old Django-like Gypsy prodigy named Jimmy Rosenberg. "I have no idea why someone hasn't done this before," says Philips. "Django has a huge cult following; there's even a Django festival in France every summer." She's not at a loss, however, when explaining Reinhardt's appeal. "Django played with an abandon no one had heard before," Philips says. (See "Jazz.") E.B.

Photograph by William P. Gottli

ank's Lounge

bare-bones bar and dance spot, which hosts Lorie d E-Man's frenzied but low-key house-music party 3ang the Party" every Friday. The party, which has :en at venues all over town from the 205 Club to ıktun, is just now settling into its own groove. 660 ılton St., at S. Elliott St., Fort Greene, Brooklyn 12-726-1322).

ın

his sprawling, bi-level, warehouselike space doesn't ›ok big-name D.J. talent, but it's got one of the ›olest interiors in clubland, with huge projections of panese *anime*, a vertiginous yet comfy balcony area, ıd a seemingly gravity-defying D.J. booth. Best of l, Fun recently snagged the cyber-fetish party "Click Drag" from the now defunct Mother. • 130 Madison ., under the Manhattan Bridge, (212-964-0303) $5.

ımelight

he Limelight is officially back from the dead thanks › its powerhouse weekend nights, which see the likes f Detroit techno icon Jeff Mills, D.J.'s from the tech- ɔ club "Tresor," and the trance heavies of the "Gate- :asher" crew grace the turntables. The mazelike club's :naissance comes just in time, as other mega-clubs ke Twilo have become uncomfortably packed, verg- ıg on the claustrophobic. • 660 Sixth Ave., at 20th St. !12-807-7780).

he Roxy

'he cavernous Chelsea institution's deeply entertain- ıg and mysteriously underattended Tuesday- and Vednesday-night roller-skating jam keeps boogie ueens' wheels spinning till the wee hours. Fridays, 'he Roxy enlists D.J. Jason Ojeda for the re-launch of s night for the straight weekender crowd. Saturdays: uperstar D.J. Victor Calderone spins house for the :helsea boys while hard-bodied go-go boys dance on ıe bar. • 515 W. 18th St. (212-627-0404). $.

hine

'his downtown spot is now host to excellent, enthu- astically received D.J.-oriented nights as well as up- nd-coming rock and dance acts. Mondays: "Giant tep Mondays" with the gloriously great D.J. Ron 'rent. Tuesdays: "Prohibited Beatz," electronica in all its ıany and varied subgenres with D.J.'s Swingsett and 'oshi. Thursdays: Reggae and soul with "Mash Pota- ›es." Fridays: Hip-hop with D.J.'s Stretch Armstrong nd Mateo. Saturdays: D.J. Greg Poole's dance-centric Tremendous." • 285 W. Broadway (212-941-0900).

pa

'he health-and-wellness theme (white walls, bath- ›oms designed to look like saunas) is thankfully ıostly unobtrusive, and the crowd is thankfully not xcessively chic. Spa promoter Steven Lewis maintains ıe kind of balance between office zhlubs, club kids, nd A-listers he pulled off so nicely in the early days of ıe now defunct Life. Wednesdays: "Big Bad Dodgy)isco," with new wave and rock spun by D.J. Paul Se- igny. Thursdays: Superpromoter Erich Conrad's Glam," with D.J. Jackie Christie. Fridays: Marc Ron- ›n and Grandmaster Flash spin hip-hop and R&B ›r the A-listers at "Hollywood 2000." • 76 E. 13th St. ›et. B'way and 4th Ave.) (212-388-1060).

'wilo

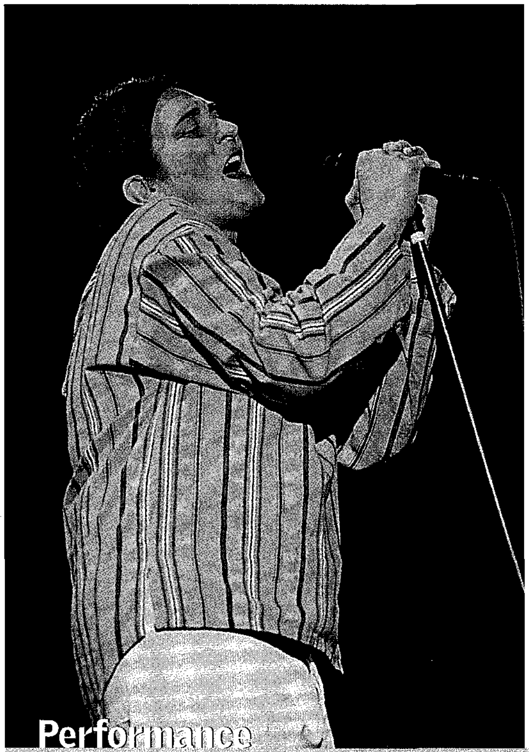
'wilo is the superclub of the moment, thanks to a re- olving lineup of dance music's biggest marquee at- :actions. Wednesdays: The upstairs lounge hosts hard .ouse and techno with "2K Wednesdays," a low-key lternative to the frenzied Friday nights. Fridays: Vorld-class D.J.'s like Carl Cox, Sasha and Digweed, nd Cassius play for a mixed crowd of drag divas and ›n-the-prowl straights. Saturdays: Aging club king D.J. unior Vasquez spins for his bare-chested Chelsea-boy ›llowing. • 530 W. 27th St. (212-268-1600).

'inyl

'inyl is still a dance-music purist's paradise, but recent ıuality-of-life crackdowns have taken an enormous ›ll on the club's once extraordinarily open vibe: the invasive pat-downs at the door by security give the place a feel that's more Rikers Island than Paradise Garage. Wednesdays: "Little" Louie Vega spins at the relaxed, dance-friendly (check out the break-dancers in the back of the room) house party "Dance Ritual." Fridays: Hard, trippy house (affectionately nicknamed "K-hole house" by its aficionados) from D.J. Danny Tenaglia. Saturdays: Timmy Regisford's fantastic house-music party "Shelter," which at about seven in the morning becomes the city's most adventurous party as Regisford bangs out everything from the Afro-beat of Fela Kuti to the ambient, pillow-soft house of Mr. Fingers. Sundays: François K, Joe Claussell, and Danny Krivit spin at the now legendary afternoon party "Body & Soul." Arrive early or you'll face a devastatingly long line at the door. • 6 Hubert St. (212-343-1379).

3round Rules

In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. $ = cash only.



hotograph by Paul Meaker/All Action/Retna.

Performance

Summer in the City

Her languorous croon made songs like "Constant Craving" hits in the early nineties, but **k.d. lang** (pictured) has had less luck with her recent album, the more ambitious *Invincible Summer*, on which she expands her usually twangy sound with orchestral and electronic soundscapes. Nevertheless, on December 2 at the Beacon Theater, Lang will no doubt showcase her soaring pipes—as well as sizable live band—to re-create the album's grand vision. (See "Concerts.")

Jazz

"Jazz at Lincoln Center" presents: "Armstrong on Film"

11/29 at 8: • Walter Reade Theater, Rose Building, 165 W. 65th St. (212-721-6500). $15.

"Jazz at Lincoln Center" presents: "Singers Over Manhattan"

11/30–12/2 at 8, 12/3 at 6: Featuring Vanessa Rubin and Kevin Mahogany. • Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse, Rose Building, 165 W. 65th St. (212-721-6500). $45.

"Jazz Insights: A Satchmo Centennial Celebration"

Lecture and performance series hosted by Arnold Jay Smith. All lectures begin at 7:45. 11/28: Johnny Blowers. • The New School, 66 W. 12th St. (212-229-5783). $35.

BAMcafé

12/2: Hi-Fi Honey. • 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-636-4111).

Birdland

Proof that jazz is alive and well in midtown, this classy boîte serves up some fine southern cuisine along with its first-rate lineup. Sundays: Chico O'Farrill Afro-Cuban Jazz Big Band. Mondays: The Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra. Tuesdays: from 5:30-7:30pm, David Ostwald's Louis Armstrong Centennial Band. 11/29–12/2: "Django Reinhardt Festival" featuring Jimmy Rosenberg, Frank Vignola, and Jon Burr. • 315 W. 44th St. (212-581-3080).

Blue Note

With a great sound system and a decent view from every seat in the house, the "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening. Sets at 9 and 11:30. 11/28–12/3: Chick Corea and Origin. 12/6: Elvin Jones. • 131 W. 3rd St. (212-475-8592).

Cajun

A brassy and brightly lit bit of New Orleans in Chelsea, dedicated to Preservation Hall–style Dixieland. Regulars include Joe Muranyi, clarinetist for the last six years of Louis Armstrong's All Stars; Eddy Davis, a jazz banjoist; and Chuck Folds, a stride pianist and sometime accompanist to trumpet legend Doc Cheatham. • 129 Eighth Ave., at 16th St. (212-691-6174).

City Hall

Fridays in the Granite Room: The Charles Mingus Orchestra. $15 cover, $10 for students. • 131 Duane Street, the corner of Church and West Broadway, (212-227-7777).

Deanna's

This Lower East Side jazz haunt run by singer Deanna Kirk should give Tonic a run for its money. Open Tuesday through Sunday. Kirk performs on most nights. • 107 Rivington St. (212-420-2258).

Iridium

In the surreal basement across from Lincoln center, you'll find formidable jazz comers and the occasional legend. Thoughtful table placement minimizes a couple of structural columns' potentially disastrous effects on sight lines. Monday nights, the Les Paul Quartet holds office hours. Sets Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30 and 10:30, with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. 11/28–12/3: John Scofield Quartet. • 44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (212-582-2121).

The Jazz Standard

A sprawling room with terrific sound and the best club menu in the city, the Jazz Standard offers a fresh mix of estimable hard-boppers, jazz greats, and artists on the rise. Mon., Tues., and Fri. at 5:30 and Sat. at 7, guitarist David O'Rourke swings in the upstairs 27 Standard bar. Sets Wed.–Thurs. at 8 and 10; Fri. and Sat. at 8, 10:30, and midnight; and Sun. at 7 and 9. $15–$25 cover; $10 minimum. 11/27: Babatunde Lea & the Jazz Guerillas. 11/28–12/3: The Kenny Dorham Festival. 12/4: In Tone. • 116 E. 27th St. (212-576-2232).

Red Blazer

Mondays and Tuesdays: Sam Ulano's Jazz band.

Wednesdays: Felix Swing Band; Alan Russell Big Jazz Band. Thursdays: Stan Rubin's Big Swing Band. Fridays: Simon Wettenhall's Oceanic Dixieland Band. Saturdays: Bob Cantwell's Dixie and Swing Band. • 32 W. 37th St. (212-947-6428).

Rose Center
12/1: David "Fathead" Newman Quartet. The Rose Center is open until 8:45 p.m. Fridays; suggested admission price is $10 for adults, $7.50 for students and seniors, $6 for children. • Central Park West at 79th St., American Museum of Natural History (212-874-3929).

Showman's Café
Reopened right on 125th Street (though not, unfortunately, in its original location adjacent to the Apollo), the legendary jazz watering hole offers slow-cooked soul-jazz and funkified hard bop every night. No cover; two-drink minimum. • 375 E. 125th St. (212-864-8941). $.

Small's
Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post–Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. • 375 E. 125th St. (212-864-8941). $.

Sweet Basil
An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. Every Saturday, jazz brunch with Ilhan Ersahin. Sundays, Chuck Folds hosts "the original jazz brunch." Every Monday, it's the Spirit of Life Ensemble. Sets at 9 and 11, with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. • 88 Seventh Ave. So., at Bleecker St. (212-242-1785).

Tonic
Yet another impeccably hip Lower East Side avant-jazzerie, Tonic has its sights set on the Knitting Factory crowd. Sunday: Klezmer Sundays. • 107 Norfolk St. (212-358-7503). $.

Village Vanguard
Perhaps the world's greatest jazz club, and certainly the most steeped in history, this dark, smoky institution is revered by fans around the world. Study the photos of jazz icons, dig the curtains Miles Davis once played to, and sneak a glance inside the kitchen, an Algonquin Round Table for the bop age. Mondays, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30, with a late 1 A.M. set Fri. and Sat. 11/28–12/3: Bill Frisell Trio. • 178 Seventh Ave. So., at W. 11th St. (212-255-4037). $.

Comedy

"Spin Cycle Comedy"
Comedy from Danny Cohen and Jodie Wasserman while you separate your whites and colors. Really. • King Size Laundromat, 178 7th Ave. at 20th St., (212-501-6016). Free.

Boston Comedy Club
Animal House ambience and, most nights, comedy to match. Shows Tues.–Thurs. at 9:30; Fri.–Sat. at 8, 10, and midnight. • 82 W. 3rd St. (212-477-1000).

Carolines On Broadway
In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show, Carolines hosts big names and talented up-and-comers in its wide, elegant, TV-studio-like basement. Mondays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. 11/28: "Hookin' Up With Christine Nagy." 11/29: "Chicks with Shticks;" Angel Salazar. 11/30–12/3: George Lopez. 11/30–12/1: Capone. • 1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (212-757-4100). $12.50-$24.50, two-drink minimum.

Comedy Cellar
A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11; Sat. at 9, 10:45, and 12:30; and Sun.–Thurs. at 9. 11/27–12/3: Colin Quinn; Dave Attell; Wanda Sykes; Gregg Rogell; Mitch Fatel; Godfrey; Greg Giraldo. • 117 MacDougal St. (212-254-3480).

Comic Strip
Probably the most expertly booked club in the city, this showcase offers an eclectic mix of comedians every night of the week. • 1568 Second Ave., bet. 81st and 82nd Sts. (212-861-9386).

Dangerfield's
Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11:15; Sat. at 8, 10:30, and 12:30 A.M.; Sun.–Thurs., continuous from 8:45. Cover is $15 Fri. and Sat. ($20 for 10:30 Sat. show), $12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. 11/27–12/3: Patty Rosborough; Nancy Redman; Jim Norton; Richie Byrne; Justin McKinney; Joe Mulligan. • 1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (212-593-1650).

Gotham
A trendy comedy spot in the Flatiron district. Every Tues. and Sun. New Talent Showcase; Wednesdays with Robert Klein. Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30 with a $10 cover; Fri. and Sat. at 8:30 and 10:30 with a $15 cover. Two-drink minimum. • 34 W. 22nd St. (212-367-9000).

Stand-up New York
Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his Letterman appearances. Shows Sun.–Thurs. at 7 and 9; Fri.–Sat. at 8, 10, and 12:15 A.M. $12 cover. 12/1–12/2: Patti Rosborough; Lisa Lampanelli; Gregg Rogell; Todd Barry. • 236 W. 78th St. (212-595-0850).

Cabaret

Algonquin Hotel
The Oak Room hosts some formidable names in its cozy environs. (Early shows Tues.–Sat., late shows Fri. and Sat.) Sunday: 12/3: brunch with Judy Barnett. 11/28–12/2: Allan Bergman and Donna Murphy. • W. 44th St. (212-840-6800).

Arci's Place
A Murray Hill–area Italian restaurant with an intim cabaret space. Mondays at 8: Jim Caruso and Bi Stritch. Through 12/2, except Sundays: Judy Ka 12/3: Karen Mason. • 450 Park Ave. South at 30th (212-532-4370).

Cafe Carlyle
Every Monday, Woody Allen swings through the e ly set with Eddy Davis & His New Orleans Jazz Ba at 8:45. $60. • Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (2 744-1600).

Cafe Pierre
Tues.–Sat., singer-pianist Kathleen Landis celebra her 14th year at the Café Pierre with a special pr gram called "Fascinating Rhythms: 50 Years American Popular Song and Jazz." Sun.–Mor Nancy Winston sings and plays piano. $19 min mum; jacket and tie required. • Fifth Ave. at 61st (212-940-8195).

The Carnegie Club at Carnegie Bar and Books
Fridays and Saturdays at 9:30 and 11:00: Sinatra in personator Cary Hoffman, backed by Stan Rubi 11-piece big band. $20 cover; two-drink minimum 156 W. 56th St. (212-957-9676).

Don't Tell Mama
What better way to wind down after an evening overwrought Broadway fare than some understat cabaret? Fridays in November and December: "T Next Big Broadway Musical." Sundays in Novemb Scott Coulter. 11/27 and 11/28: Tom Schmid. • 3 W. 46th St. (212-757-0788). $.

Feinstein's at the Regency
Michael Feinstein's cabaret space at the Regen Hotel shares the room with the restaurant 540 Par Tickets are $50 Tues.–Fri.; $75 for the early sho on Friday and all shows on Saturday; $50 food-an drink minimum. 11/27–12/3: Rosemary Cloone • 540 Park Ave., at E. 61st St. (212-307-4100 or 21 339-4095).

FireBird Café
The theater district's newest post-show snuggery, rig next door to an overwrought Russian restaurant– steer clear of the Cossack-dagger-toting doormen a you'll be fine. Sets Wed.–Thurs. at 9; Fri.–Sat. at 9 a 11. $30 cover; $15 minimum. • 365 W. 46th St. (21 586-0244).

Judy's
This cozy and friendly piano bar features two perfo mance spaces, a fine menu, and a weekly gig by Ju herself. 11/27: Linda Bianchi; "Leer Mondays." 11/2 Diana Templeton. 11/29: Lynne Kerr. 11/30: Cydn Halpin. 12/1: Ruby Rims. 12/2: Judy Kreston a David Lahm. 12/3: Doris Chwatsky; "Christm Toons;" Marieann Meringolo. 12/4: Linda Bianch "Leer Mondays." • 169 Eighth Ave., bet. 18th and 19 Sts. (212-929-5410).

Performance

Still Going Steady

The Sex Pistols might have inspired more critical analysis, but punk rock's most influenti band just might be Manchester, UK's **The Buzzcocks** (pictured), whose short, sweet thre chord style has been co-opted by punk-popsters like Blink 182 and Green Day. While t group's recent albums have simply re-hashed their formula, their remarkable string of singl in the late seventies (collected on the great a bum *Singles Going Steady*), like "Ever Fallen Love (With Someone You Shouldn't Have Fall in Love With)?," "Love You More," and "I Don Mind," might be the most enduring songs that era apart from Elvis Costello's. Pogo alo with their legions of fans at the Bowery Ba room December 1 and 2. (See "Small Stages.'

Photograph courtesy of Go-Kart Record

TheMix

Edited by Boris Kachka

adio Highlights

lected Shorts
ries read by actors, recorded live from Symphony
ace. This week, Cherry Jones reads Gina Berriault's
he Infinite Passion of Expectation," and Jack
vidson reads John Biguenot's "And Never Came
p." • 11/26, noon–1 P.M. WNYC, 820 AM.

**nd Trouble Came—Musical Responses to
s"**
this episode of "New Sounds With John Schaefer,"
plays works by Laura Kaminsky, C. Bryan Rulon,
onna McKevitt, and others. • 12/1, 11 P.M.–midnight.
NYC, 93.9 FM.

tudio 360"
his week, Kurt Andersen discusses the evolution of
tchen design and all things culinary with Nora
hron, artist Liza Lou, Northwestern's Elizabeth
romley, graphic designer Stephen Doyle, and Gail
wey of *Martha Stewart Living*. • 12/2, 10–11 A.M. WNYC,
.9 FM.

ectures and Panels

**tolen Art: From 19th Century Paris to Nazi
ermany"**
harles Dellheim, director of the Interdisciplinary Hu-
anities Program at Arizona State University, traces
e history of art stolen during the Holocaust and discusses the current debate over the restitution of works with Constance Lowenthal, director of the Commission for Art Recovery of The World Jewish Congress. • 11/28 at 6:30 P.M. The Jewish Museum, 1109 Fifth Avenue, at 92nd St. (212-423-3200); $11, $10 students and seniors.

"On the Threshold of the Century: Science and Religion In Dialogue"
Stephen J. Gould and Rabbi David Wolpe conduct a panel discussion on the role of science and religion in today's society, from a personal perspective. • 11/29 at 6:30 P.M. Temple Emanu-El, Leon Lowenstein Auditorium, 10 E. 66th St. (212-744-1400); free.

Justice Minister Yossi Beilin
The outspoken Israeli cabinet member and author of *His Brother's Keeper: Israel and Diaspora Jewry in the 21st Century* discusses the current crisis in the Middle East. • 11/29 at 7:30 P.M. 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. (212-996-1100); $15.

"Kids & Careers: Choosing The Right Combination"
New York *Times* columnist Lisa Belkin moderates a panel of authors, including Katherine Wyse Goldman (*Working Mothers 101*), Susan Lewis (*Reinventing Ourselves After Motherhood*), and Suzanne Braun Levine (*Father Courage*). • 11/29 at 7:15 P.M. Congregation Rodeph Sholom, 7 W. 83rd St. (212-580-0099); $10.

"Louis Armstrong on Film"
Acclaimed New Orleans trumpeter Nicholas Payton narrates a presentation on Louis Armstrong, focusing on film appearances, feature films, shorts, live concert footage, and more. • 11/29 at 8 P.M. Walter Reade Theater, Rose Building, 165 W. 65th St. (212-258-9800); $15.

"Human Rights and the Environment: When Defending the Planet Means Risking Your Freedom"
Award-winning journalist Bill Weinberg, New York City Council member Kathryn Freed, and human-rights activists Alejandro Queral, Peter Kirn, and Patrick Kwan discuss environmental prisoners Rodolfo Montiel and Teodoro Cabrera and invite participants to sign an appeal for their release. • 11/30 at 6:30 P.M. The House of the Redeemer, 7 E. 95th St. (212-448-9118); free.

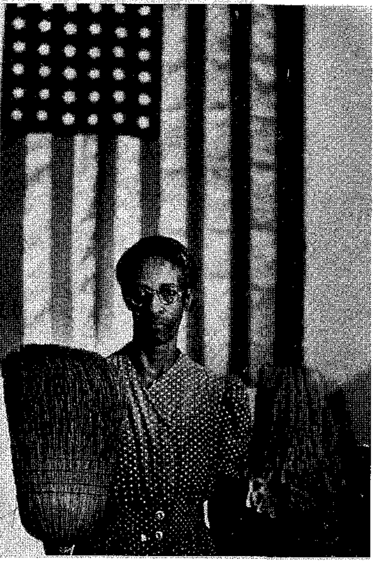
"Rice in Asia: The Grain That Shapes Cultures"
A one-day symposium exploring the culture of rice and its role in Japan, China, and Southeast Asia, featuring illustrated lectures by anthropologists, culinary professionals, cookbook authors, journalists, and religion scholars, as well as food tastings and ceremonial displays. • 12/2 at 10 A.M. Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (212-752-3015 for tickets); $10, $5 students and seniors.

"Four Authors: All Women, All Jewish, All Different"
Nomi Eve, Molly Jong Fast, Myla Goldberg, and Tova Mirvis sample and discuss their most recent novels, which all deal with the conflict between community, tradition, individuality, and Jewish identity. • 12/3 at 11 A.M. Stephen Wise Free Synagogue, 30 W. 68th St. (212-877-4050); $5.

On Air

lash Gordon Returns

Gordon Parks isn't just the subject of **Half Past Autumn**, the HBO biopic debuting on his 88th birthday, November 30, at 9 P.M. He also provided the score, the photography, and much of the narration, remaining the master of his own life story. Born the fifteenth child of a struggling Kansas farm family, Parks (whose classic 1942 image, *American Gothic*, is pictured below) became widely known as the first African-American photographer to work for *Life* magazine, where he documented gang warfare, celebrity lifestyles, Paris fashions, South American poverty, and the Nation of Islam. But as the director of *Shaft*, the godfather of Malcolm X's daughter, and the photographer of Bergman's affair with Rossellini, Parks has become the anti-Forrest Gump—not a passive participant but an active molder of America's cultural history. Particularly during his tenure at *Life*, Parks's abrupt shifts between art and documentary were as painful as they were exhilarating. "You can imagine shooting a photograph of a young man on the street dying, blood gushing out of his face," Parks says, "and then the next day shooting a beautiful woman prancing around, smiling, in a gorgeous dress. It's very difficult to readjust your thinking." His recently published book *A Star for Noon* contains poems that correspond to semi-abstract shots of female nudes, with an attached CD of sparse compositions he wrote for specific photos. Having just finished writing a novel about the British painter J.M.W. Turner, Parks is now seeking his next fix. "You always have a letdown after you finish something, and you need something else to get you going again," he says. "There's no reason for me to stop as long as my brain will function and I can get the ideas." B.K.



otograph courtesy of HBO.

The Written Word

Peter Cameron
The author reads from his latest novel, *The Weekend*. • 11/28 at 7 P.M. A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St. (212-989-4850); free.

Tom Collichio
The head chef at Gramercy Tavern hosts a tasting and a discussion and signing of his new book, *Think Like a Chef*. • 11/28 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 33 E. 17th St. (212-253-0810); free.

Louis Begley
The author reads from his newest novel, *Schmidt Delivered*. • 11/28 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 82nd St. (212-362-8835); free.

Tomaz Salamun, Tom Sleigh, and Star Black
The authors read from *The Feast*, *The Dreamhouse*, and *Balefire*, respectively, at an evening of poetry hosted by Rene Steinke and Nuar Alsadir. • 11/28 at 8 P.M. The National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park South (212-592-4648); free.

Jenny, Martha, and Laura McPhee
The three sisters discuss their new book, *Girls*, and their experiences traveling cross-country to photograph and interview extraordinary young girls. • 11/29 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 82nd St. (212-362-8835); free.

Hunter S. Thompson
The good doctor signs copies of his newest work, *Fear and Loathing in America*. • 12/1 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 33 E. 17th St. (212-253-0810); free.

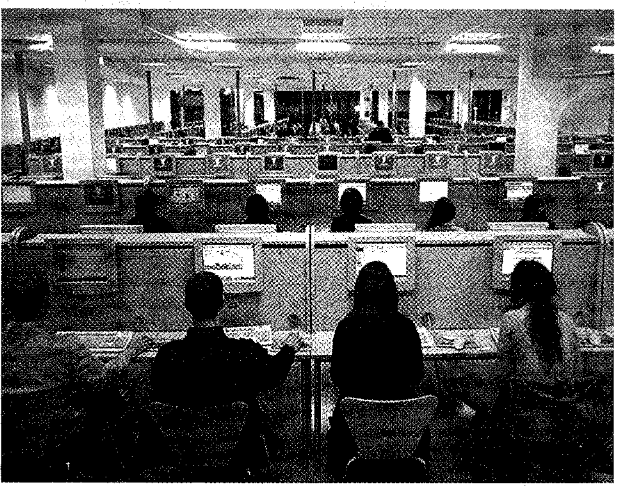
Stacy Doris and Lytle Shaw
The established avant-garde poets read selections as part of the Segue Foundation's Saturday reading series. • 12/2 at 4 P.M. Double Happiness, 173 Mott St., at Broome St. (212-941-1282); $4 suggested donation goes to the readers.

Timothy Liu and Yona Harvey
The writers read from their newest works, *Say Goodnight* and *Sparkle*, respectively, as part of the "World of Nature in Literature" series. • 12/3 at 2 P.M. Wave Hill, W. 249th St. and Independence Ave. (718-549-3200, ext. 308); free.

Opening

Megabytes

Times Square's latest pleasure palace-cum-superstore puts the E-Walk multiplex and Applebee's giant burgers to shame. Flanking the sparkling new Madame Tussaud's, the easyEverything Internet Café will be so big, the Guinness world-records people will be making an appearance at the opening. New Yorkers put off by the blondwood public-library design (pictured below, the company's similar, slightly smaller London café) may at least find solace in its always-open policy and its opening-week rate of $1 for five hours. Thereafter, prices are determined by how crowded the place is—so sending that "Happy New Year from Times Square" message will presumably run you top dollar.



Bill Kirchner
A book-signing and discussion with the editor of *The Oxford Companion To Jazz* and contributors James T. Maher, Dan Morgenstern, Gene Seymour, Stephanie Crease, and Richard M. Sudhalter. • 12/4 at 7:30 P.M. Chartwell Booksellers, 55 E. 52nd St. (212-308-0643); free.

Christopher Lowell
A book-signing with the talk-show host and author of *Christopher Lowell's Seven Layers of Design: Fearless, Fabulous Decorating.* • 12/4 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 33 East 17th St. (212-253-0810); free.

Rosellen Brown and Paule Marshall
The authors read from their works *Half a Heart* and *The Fisher King,* respectively. • 12/4 at 8 P.M. 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. (212-996-1100); $12.

Mary Morris, Hettie Jones, Timothy Liu, Gwendolen Gross, Rachel Hados, and Kimiko Hahn
An evening of poetry and prose to support *Global City Review,* with readings by all the authors and a reception afterward. • 12/5 at 5 P.M. Blue Heron Arts Center, 123 E. 24th St. (212-206-7485); $10, $5 students.

Special Events

Tours

"Merchants, Mayors and Magnificence: Manhattan's Civic Center"
A historical tour of the city's most impressive official buildings, including City Hall, Surrogate's Court, and the Municipal Building. • 12/1 at 1 P.M. St. Paul's Chapel, Broadway between Fulton and Vesey Sts. (212-935-3960); $10, $8 students and seniors.

"Christmas on Fifth Avenue"
A historic tour focusing on the way New York celebrates the Christmas season, visiting the Rockefeller Center tree, holiday store-window displays, and the world's largest department store. • 12/2 at 2 P.M. The Villard Courtyard of the New York Palace Hotel, at the NE corner of Madison Ave. and 50th St. (212-969-8262); $10.

"New York in the Time of Washington Irving"
Architectural historian Francis Morrone explores the world of Irving and his friends and colleagues (including John Jacob Astor and Samuel Ruggles) from the 1830s to the 1850s, focusing on the area bounded by 4th and 21st Streets. • 12/2 at 1 P.M. The northeast corner of Lafayette and East 4th Sts. (212-935-3960); $15.

"If These Walls Could Talk"
Jerry Weinstein, assistant manager of the Chelsea Hotel, leads a tour through the Victorian Gothic landmark, now known for its one-time artistic residents, including Willem de Koonig, Arthur Miller, and Thomas Wolfe. • 12/3, 1 to 4 P.M. The Chelsea Hotel, 222 W. 23rd St. (212-415-5500); $25, advance reservations required.

Benefits

Wildlife Trust Benefit
A benefit performance of the improved, animal-friendly Barnum's Kaleidoscape circus act with singer Art Garfunkel as chair, to support the not-for-profit's efforts to conserve threatened wild species and their habitats. • 11/28 at 7:30 P.M. P.S. 372, Carroll St. bet. Tl and Fourth Aves., Brooklyn (212-875-9879); free.

Seasons of Hope Awards Dinner
The third annual awards dinner to benefit the Ame can Foundation for AIDS Research, featuring ceremony in honor of Rosie O'Donnell, Nata Richardson, and Kenneth Cole, with host come enne Kathy Griffin and a musical performance by J sica Simpson. • 11/29, cocktails at 6:30 P.M., dinner at 9 Roseland Ballroom, 239 W. 5 St. (212-806-1637); $1,000.

Photography Benefit Au tion
An auction of works by nota photographers, including Ju Margaret Cameron, Eva R binstein, Edward Weston, a others, to benefit the Sol Photo Gallery. • 12/2 at 1 P.M., 1 Soho Photo Gallery, 15 White (212-226-8571); $10.

Fashion Rescue Bene Sale
The UJA-Federation's annu benefit sale with 75% off me chandise, including clothing, a cessories, jewelry, and hor furnishings from designers li Tommy Hilfiger, Kenneth Co Liz Claiborne, and othe Proceeds go to organizatio fighting AIDS, cancer, domes violence, poverty, and drug a diction. • 12/2, 6:30–9:30 P.M.; 12/3, 11 A.M.–7:30 P.M., 12, 11 A.M.–9 P.M. Expo Center at Madison Square Garden, Se enth Ave. at 32nd St. (212-836-1776); $10.

CHIPS Fund-raising Family Fair
A street fair to benefit CHIPS, a shelter and soup kitch for homeless pregnant women, featuring a craft fa flea market, raffles, food, and games. • 12/2, 10 A.M.–5 P. 12/3, 10 A.M.–4 P.M. P.S. 372, Carroll St. between Third a Fourth Aves., Brooklyn (212-875-9879); free.

Society of Illustrators Auction
Annual auction to benefit the society's Student Scholarship Program, featuring more than 200 works by accomplished illustrators, including Bernie Fuchs, Al Hirschfeld, and Burt Silverman. • 12/4 at 6 P.M., The Museum of American Illustrators, 128 E. 63rd St. (212-838-2560); $30.

Exhibit

Day With(out) Art: A Day of Action and Mourning in Response to the AIDS Crisis
The museum's twelfth annual event features guided tours of art and ritual objects that illustrate themes of healing, mourning, memory, and activism, in conjunction with World AIDS Day. • Tours at 12:15 P.M. and 2:15 P.M., 11/29, 11/30, 12/4, and 12/5. The Jewish Museum, 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (212-423-3200); free with $7 su gested museum admission.

Other Events

Rockefeller Tree-Lighting Ceremony
The 68th annual lighting of the tree, also featured a two-hour special on the WNBC network. • 11/2 7–9 P.M. Rockefeller Center, 48th St.–50th St., betwe Fifth and Sixth Aves. (212-332-6868); free.

Miracle on Madison Avenue
A one-day event in which participating stores- Giorgio Armani, Polo Ralph Lauren, Bulgari, ar others—donate 20% of their sales to benefit Tl Children's Aid Society's health services for childre • 12/3, 12–5 P.M. Madison Avenue between 57th and 79 Sts. (212-949-4945); free.

Holiday Market at Union Square
A market featuring unique gifts from more than 1(of New York's best designers and boutiques ar various importers from around the world. • Throu 12/24, Monday-Saturday, 11 A.M.–8 P.M., Sunday, 11 A.M.

Game Week

HOME AWAY ▨

	Mon: 11/27	Tue: 11/28	Wed: 11/29	Thurs: 11/30	Fri: 12/1	Sat: 12/2	Sun: 12/3
GIANTS							▨ WAS FOX 1 P.M.
JETS							IND CBS 4:15 P.M.
KNICKS	VAN MSG 7:30 P.M.		MIA MSG 8 P.M.		▨ CHI MSG 8:30 P.M.	MIN MSG 7:30 P.M.	
NETS		UTA FSNY 7:30 P.M.	▨ DET METRO 7:30 P.M.		▨ ORL METRO 7:30 P.M.	ORL FSNY 7 P.M.	
RANGERS		LA MSG 7 P.M.	▨ NJ FSNY 7:30 P.M.			▨ TOR METRO 7 P.M.	COL MSG 7 P.M.
ISLANDERS	TAM FSNY 7:30 P.M.			TOR FSNY 7:30 P.M.	▨ NJ FSNY 7:30 P.M.		NJ FSNY 1 P.M.
DEVILS			NYR FSNY 7:30 P.M.		NYI FSNY 7:30 P.M.		▨ NYI FSNY 1 P.M.

Photograph courtesy of Easy Everythir

. The 14th St. entrance to the Union Square subway
ıtion (212-529-9262); free.

and Central Terminal Holiday Fair

ıe second annual holiday fair features a laser
ht show, a “Grand Central in Miniature” dis-
ıy, and a shopping fair with 72 specialty vendors
ling their wares. • Laser Light Show daily through
'31, 11 A.M.–9 P.M. Holiday fair through 12/24, Mon-
y–Saturday 11 A.M.–8 P.M., Sunday 11 A.M.-6 P.M. Minia-
e display through 12/24. Grand Central Terminal, E.
nd St. bet. Lexington and Park Aves. (212-340-
10); free.

ports

oonlight Ride/Roll

osted by the Empire Skate Club in conjunction
th Time's Up!, the Moonlight Ride/Roll meets
Columbus Circle for an easy-paced bike ride or
-line skate through Central Park. Bring a flash-
ht; recommended for high-intermediate skaters
d above. • 12/1 at 10 P.M. (212-802-8222).

AC Youth Development Indoor Track Meet

he Metropolitan Athletic Congress hosts the
st of several Friday-night meets for youths of
veral age groups. Visit the MAC's Website,
ww.mactrack.org, for scheduled events, fees, and
uth categories. • 12/1 at 6 P.M., Armory Track and
eld Center, 216 Fort Washington Ave., at 186th St.
12-227-0071).

ot Chocolate 15K

arm up with this 9.3-mile race through Central
rk. Numbers and souvenir mugs may be picked
at the New York Road Runners Club, 9 East
th St., 11/30–12/1 from noon to 7 P.M. or on
ce day from 7:30 to 9 A.M. Prizes awarded in sev-
al age groups. Nonmembers $17, limited race-
y entries $22. Visit the NYRRC Website, www.-
rrc.org, for starting location or more informa-
on. • 12/2 at 9:30 A.M. (212-860-4455).

Panel

Block Party

As *Sidewalk*, Mitchell Duneier's chronicle of New York's book-and-magazine street vendors, hits paperback, the author invites a couple of its leading characters to a panel discussion entitled **Not on My Block: Sidewalk Life in the Giuliani Era**. Documentary filmmaker Barry Brown also shows clips from his street-level travels with Duneier, all at the New School on December 4. (See "Lectures and Panels" for details.)

otograph by Ovie Carter.

MODEL *Continued from page 62*

work: prostitution. She would sometimes go out until extremely late, says Mario, and the fact that all of her underwear, bras, and makeup are missing supports the notion that she may have led a double life, with an apartment somewhere else that she worked out of. She was aggressive in courting attention at hotel bars like the St. Regis, says one man, to the point where she nearly humiliated herself. A friend who did her makeup for one of her last test shots points out that he was asked to leave during the shoot, and suggests that something sexual might have been going on. "It happens," he says, shrugging.

"No way," says Fletcher, aghast. "That girl was collecting cobwebs waiting for those fantasy guys. I was telling her, 'Bitch, you need to buy a dildo or something because you got to get *laid*!' It's not that she wasn't into kinky sex—she wasn't into sex." He sighs. "What a mess. Maybe Mario fed her to the snakes."

Mario, at this point, is no longer a suspect. He might've been wrong about Europe because he was too out-of-it to understand what Gruart was really saying; the police have even stopped looking for the couch, deeming it "irrelevant." "Is it weird that your sister disappears and you move around her stuff, maybe even throw stuff out?" asks a detective. "Yes. Is it a crime? No." He sighs. "At this point, we got nothing. A total mystery."

There's always one other possibility: Gruart could have found the man she was looking for, the one who would make up for all the disappointments of the past years, who could give her the jet-set life she'd always craved. Unsurprisingly, Mario is willing to buy into this theory. "In my mind, I'm thinking she's gone off with one of her rich boyfriends," he says. "Manhattan is an opportunist world, people coming from all over the place looking for entertainment, for a companion, for all things that are pleasing. Maybe she met one of them." Perhaps she's off with him right now, sailing the Greek Islands in a big white yacht, lingering over a ten-course dinner with a group of dashing, fascinating people, their chatter spreading out over the sea as the sun goes down.

"You go, girl," says a friend, weighing the possibility that Lourdes might be out there somewhere, finally living the high life. "Whip 'em all." ■

If you have any information about Lourdes Gruart, please call 800-577-TIPS. Anonymous calls are accepted.

TROMA *Continued from page 41*

lion in about five weeks, and very few have failed to turn a profit. So the sky is sunny? Not to the savage eye of Lloyd Kaufman.

In 1998, his autobiography, *All I Need to Know About Filmmaking I Learned From The Toxic Avenger*, was published. "This is the worst it's ever been," Kaufman writes. "Our distribution channels—the theaters and video stores and TV channels—have been fucked by consolidation . . ."

KAUFMAN MUST HAVE BEEN IN A FUNK that day. "Actually, things are a bit on the upswing," he conceded at the last shoot. This was on a set done up with a Christmas tree, Frosty the Snowman, a gargantuan red teddy bear, and string upon string of tree lights. You just knew something vile was about to unspool here. On cue, Ron Jeremy tramped onto the set, where he started serenading a young boy.

"I love you, Daddy," the boy said.

"I love you, too, Casey," the hardest-working man in porn business replied.

"Cut! It's good. Beautiful!" Kaufman said.

"One take?" Jeremy said, startled.

The young boy disappeared and reappeared—wearing a dress.

"How do you feel?" someone asked.

"Uncomfortable," the boy said uncomfortably.

"I think I see a lawsuit down the road," somebody said. (Okay, it was me.)

The boy's mother, who had been sitting outside, belatedly reading the script, hurtled onto the set and snatched him out of harm's way.

"Nobody showed her the script. I said, 'Show her the script,' " Kaufman mourned. "Just stay calm. There's lots of kids who would love to be in the film. The production people—they live in some kind of weird world."

"It's Tromaville," Ron Jeremy said.

"It's not Tromaville," Kaufman snapped.

It happened that there was a female Dutch still photographer on the set with a fresh face, her hair in bangs. From the back she looked like the boy's twin.

Okaaaay!

That take went into the can. But then there was a problem involving a venerable performer who was required to dribble. It kept going wrong. "C'mon! The actress is peaking," Kaufman called out. He brooded about the shoot. "It started with the problem with the Young Boy. And now we've got a problem with the Old Lady. It's a very Taoist day." ■

Edited by Susan Ave

Happening

And a Little Child Shall Feed Them

When I was growing up, I couldn't get out of the kitchen fast enough. My aversion had less to do with my mother's boil-it-to-mush-or-burn-it technique than with my first-generation feminism. So, inevitably, my 5-year-old daughter gravitates to food preparation. Whatever the reason (*Molto Mario*? Anti-feminist backlash? Anti-Empire Szechuan backlash?), recent months have seen a proliferation of **children's cooking classes**, not only at recreation centers but also at high-toned French-cooking schools and chic restaurants. What's more, the programs fill up purely by word of mouth. "I used to get one request a year," says Frederic Van Coppernolle, chief cook at the French Culinary Institute in SoHo. "Then I got one a month, then two. Now it's all the time." The school offers private sessions and, next year, mommy-and-me versions. At Union Square Cafe, future foodies sign up early for the annual Morning Market Meeting for Kids, which includes a Q&A on running a restaurant, a tour of the Greenmarket, and preparation of a fairly elaborate dish. (This year, a gingerbread house.) "Fifteen years ago, there was no TV Food Network, no celebrity chefs," explains Union Square Cafe partner Paul Bolles-Beaven, adding that the people who spent sizable chunks of disposable income at Lespinasse and Chanterelle are now parents with "kids who are old enough to learn about cooking." Alley Pond Environmental Center in Queens has stepped up to the countertop as well, with monthly cooking classes for preschoolers. (December's already full.) The trend has even seeped into the usually catered domain of public relations: On December 3 at the new sixteen-screen Regal Cinemas in Battery Park City, several master pastry chefs will compete against kids, using Barbie Bake With Me ovens. Next thing you know, the Malibu Dream House will get a Viking stove. S.A.

Children's Events

Hail to the Chefs
In an effort to attract attention, the new Regal Cinemas in Battery Park City is holding a baking contest: master pastry chefs vs. kids on Barbie Bake With Me ovens. Both *Rugrats in Paris: The Movie* and *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas* will be playing repeatedly at the sixteen-screen theater. • 12/3 at 2 P.M.; in the theater's lobby, 102 North End Ave. (212-945-4370); free.

Hail Again
Cooking classes for kids seem to be in abundance these days. Alley Pond Environmental Center offers a monthly class for 3- and 4-year-olds. Menus have included tacos, banana wrap-ups, smoothies, and pizza. • 228-06 Northern Blvd. Douglaston, Queens (718-229-4000); $11.

Hail for the Final Time
Want your little darling to take over kitchen duties? The French Culinary Institute offers private classes for young'uns. • 462 Broadway (212-219-8890); fees vary.

Africa on Film
The eighth annual African Diaspora Film Festival is under way and includes a group of flicks that are okay for kids. One in particular, *Sho 'Nuff*, is a coming-of-age story about a 13-year-old boy who dreams of playing the music of his father and grandfather, traditional New Orleans jazz. Call for other screenings and schedule. • *Sho 'Nuff* plays on 11/29 at noon; Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave. (212-864-1760); $8, $6 for students and seniors.

Full-Time Job, Full-Time Parenting?
A panel discussion, including *Times* columnist Lisa Belkin, on "Kids and Careers: Choosing the Right Combination." • 11/29, 7:15 P.M. to 9:15 P.M.; Congregation Rodeph Sholom, 7 W. 83rd St. (212-580-0099); $20.

Robby the Robot to Buzz Lightyear
So there's this Manhattan guy with a lot of toys and stuff. And how cool is this? His collection of more than 250 robots and space toys are on exhibit at Brooklyn Museum of Art. Robert Lesser's collecti illustrates the toys that have appeared on every k holiday list from World War II to the present. • N through 1/28/01; 200 Eastern Parkway (718-638-500 $4, $2 students and seniors, free for kids 11 and youn

The Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe
A musical based on the classic book by C. S. Le tells of the adventures of four children in war-t England who accidentally enter the land of Nar by climbing through a magical wardrobe. In Narr the kids encounter an evil witch, a great Lion Ki and year-round winter. • 12/2 and 12/10 at 12:30 P at the Auditorium at Equitable Tower, 787 Seventh A bet. 51st and 52nd Sts. (212-627-7373); $19.

The News From Lake Wobegon
Garrison Keillor may have left New York and ma his home in Minnesota, but he's back for his ann al penance. "A Prairie Home Companion," whi airs live on WNYC every Saturday at 6 P.M., will performed at Town Hall for a few Saturdays. Ke lor's engaging stories are highlighted by his soun effects guy, Tom Keith, who welcomes kids af the show to come up and sh him what they can do. • 12, 12/9, 12/16, 12/23 at 5:45 P.M.; 1 W. 43rd St. (212-840-282 $37.50–$42.50.

This One's Got Legs
The Little Mermaid dreams o day when she can explore t wonders of the world above t sea. This adaptation from Litera Alive has charming musical nu bers, dancing, puppetry, and t wonderful magic of childre theater. Best of all, kids can co to the preshow workshop to lea parts of the performance and c ate parts of the set. • Now throu 12/30; Hitchcock-Rockefeller Audi rium, 610 Lexington Ave., at 53rd (212-866-5170); $15 for the show, for the preshow workshop.

Sugarplums Onstage
The New York City Ballet ope its holiday season with Geor Balanchine's *Nutcracker,* which i cludes the company's entire ros of more than 150 dancers and musicians, as well two alternating casts of 50 children. Tell kids watch for the Christmas tree that grows from 12 40 feet, and the onstage snowstorm. • *Now throu* 12/31; New York State Theater at Lincoln Center, Bro way at 63rd St. (212-870-5570); $16–$85.

Kaleidoscape
We New Yorkers want things big, but the folks at Ri gling Bros. are betting that we'll embrace a one-ri circus under a tent in Bryant Park. Blending conte porary theater with classic circus antics, "Kaleidoscap features award-winning clowns, jugglers, and a set human golden statues. A reception with all the pe formers begins an hour before showtime. • N through 12/31; Sixth Ave. bet. 40th and 42nd Sts. (877-BARNUM); $20–$75. VIP couch seating is also available.

DECEMBER 4, 2000—VOL. 33, NO. 47. Periodic postage paid at New York, New York, and additio al mailing offices. Editorial and business offices: 21 508-0700. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes New York, Box 54661, Boulder, Colorado 8032 4661. Subscription rates in the U.S. and possessio 50 issues, $42. For subscription assistance, wri Joseph Oliver, New York Magazine, Subscripti Department, Box 54661, Boulder, Colorado 8032 4661. Or call (800) 678-0900 or (212) 447-474 Printed in the U.S.A.

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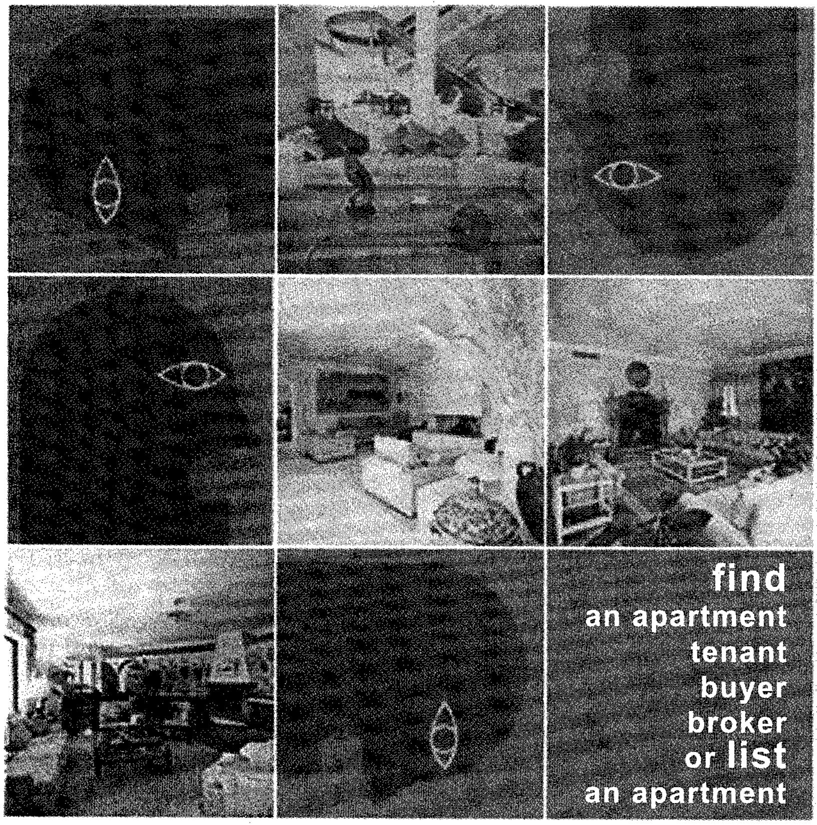

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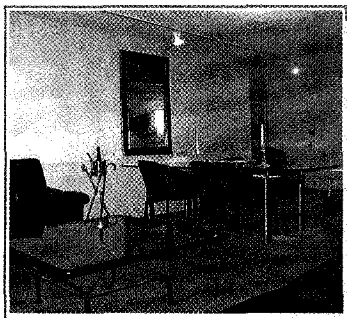

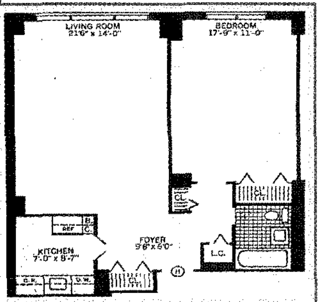

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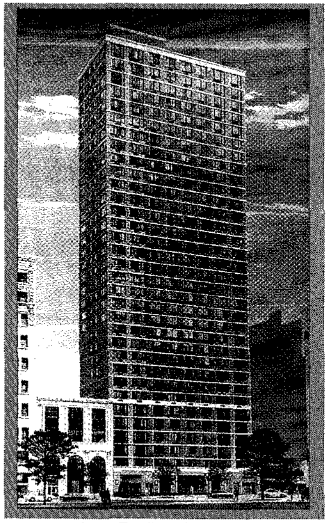

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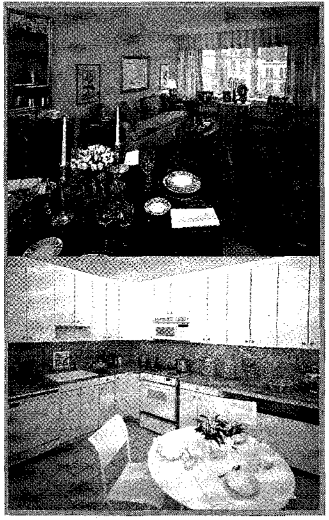

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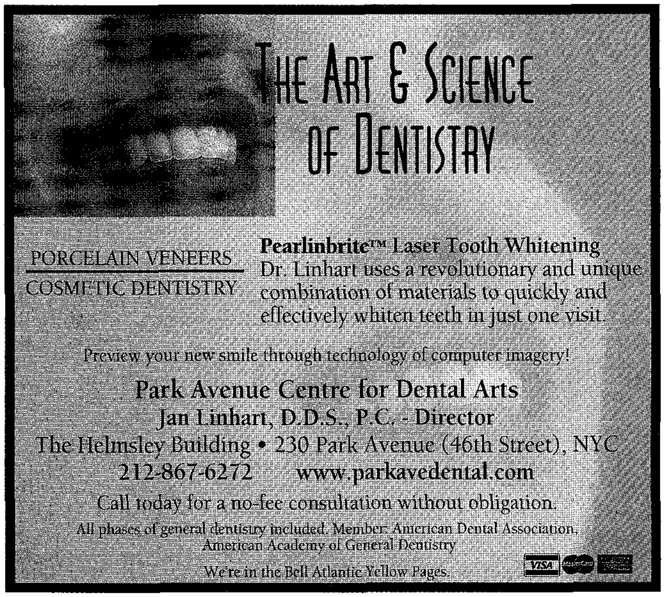
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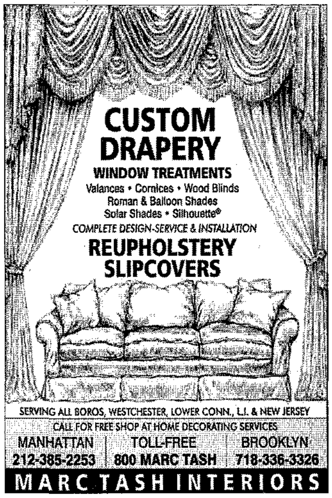

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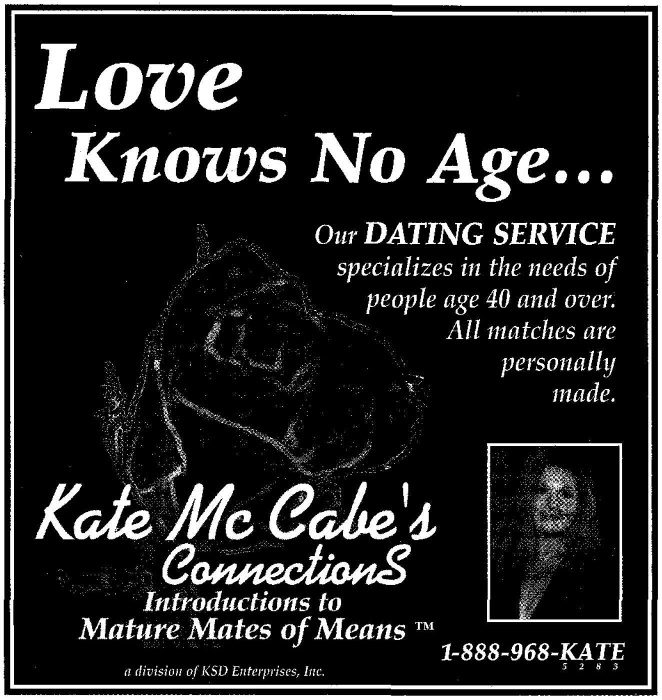
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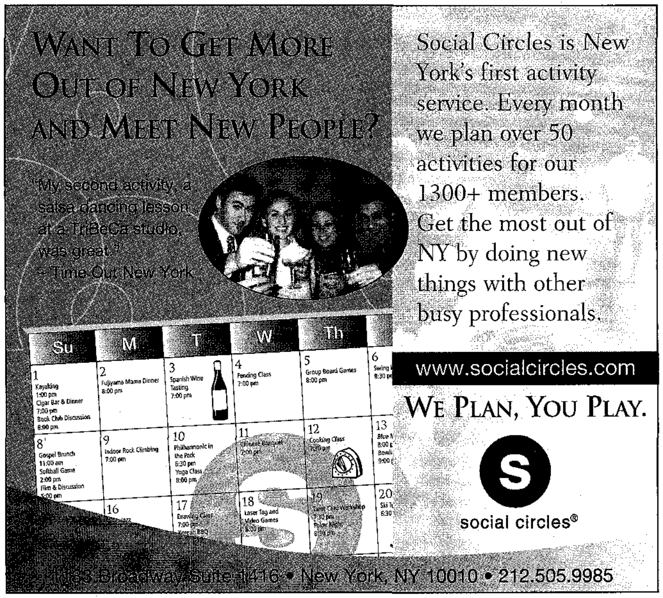
Ugly As Sin, Dumb As Dirt—Poor-as-a-church-mouse lady seeks witty man, 55-67, who reads, thinks, and is embarrassed by Clinton. Please be well-bred, moderate, slim and single. 5939✉

Entrepreneurial Woman—40s, seeks entrepreneurial man for partner in business and partner in life! Must want to start a family and have children now! Values family and education. Let's spend the holidays together. Photo, curriculum vitae, e-mail address, home, office and cell phone numbers to: POB 1787, NY, NY 10150. E-mail: WorldEquities@aol.com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Healthy, Somewhat Wealthy—And sincere, single white male who is attractive (some even think good-looking), successful NYC business owner, 6'3", 205 lbs, early 50s, nonsmoker, athletic, divorced, emotionally open, playful, adventurous, mischievous and huggable, who appreciates the finer things in life. Seeking someone special to share real quality time in a giving/receiving long-term relationship. Please be at least 5'2", with a fabulous figure, slim/pretty, great legs, somewhat buxom, 32-45, size 8 or under, open, warm, caring, passionate, communicative, sensitive, unencumbered, and still believes in fairy tales (love). Photo and phone a must or no reply. 5956 ✉

Tall, Professional, Fit Male, 48—Italian-American, sense of humor, secure, honest, lover of life, healthy, great cook, single, no children. Explore and relax with me. Seek sincere lady, 28-45, for friendship, romance, commitment. No games. Photo/letter/home phone. 5942✉

Fit, Upbeat Male—40, lives approximately one hour north of Manhattan. Seeks spontaneous female, 28-38, who can dress up for ballroom dance, yet adventurous enough to roll up her sleeves and help me fix my bicycle. Interests: playful conversation, art, biking, and cuddling in front of the fireplace. Photo/phone. 5949 ✉

Man Of Substance—Physically, emotionally and financially, would consider a woman who is beautiful, warm, giving and sensual. Photo/phone, please. 5947✉

Let's Meet For A Drink—Then we'll see... RSVP: men, mid 60s. 5926 ✉

Handsome Black Professional, 37—Seeks very attractive female with personality to match. Me: Ivy, athletic, financially secure. You: warm, affectionate, no attitude. 5957 ✉☎

Radiant Smile—Beautiful auburn hair, 5'7", very pretty, slim, fit LI woman with wit, warmth and class, seeks financially secure Jewish man, 48-56. Photo. 5933✉☎

Russian-Jewish Beauty—Successful professional, very athletic and cultured, looking for a male with the same qualities (42-50). Note/photo. 5937 ✉

Gay, Good-Looking, In-Shape—60, gentleman, accomplished, stylish, affluent, 5'11", 175 lbs - interested in arts, travel, gardens, country/city life style. Seeks sensitive, bright, creative younger counterpart for serious exclusive relationship. Photo essential. 5913 ✉

Fine Athlete, Mind And Soul—Tennis pro, assists in top levels of US tennis including US Open, National Ratings. Assistant editor of leading sports mag - well-sculpted body, 40s. Seeks attractive nonsmoker - atypical New Yorker, into matters more spiritual than material. Photo, please. 5955 ✉☎

Attractive, Boston Single Jewish Man
61, ex-Upper West Sider, visits NY oft
Seeks female for full connection wh
I'm there. Have e-mail/fax. 5924 ✉☎

Very Attractive, In-Shape Male—
MBA professional, dynamic, fun-lovi
and kindhearted - looking for female w
similar qualities. Phone/photo. 5950✉☎

Very Pretty Professional—War
vivacious, 42, Christian, "girl nex
door". I am 5'5", slim, blond, blu
eyed, with advanced degree. Se
educated, attractive professional ma
with old-fashioned values. Integrity a
warm heart essential; playfulness and
easy smile a plus! Note/photo, pleas
will reciprocate. 5953 ✉

Gay White Female, MD—With ma
interests, seeks similar, class
stable, sincere, nonsmoker, 45-50, g
white female. 5932 ✉

Very Attractive Jewish Male, 37–
Successful businessman from NJ, divorce
5'8", dark brown hair/eyes, nice buil
honest, caring and romantic, seeks a ve
attractive Jewish female, 28-37, for serio
relationship. Must be beautiful insi
and out. Note/photo essential. 5934✉☎

All I'm Missing—Is a picture of you
my desk. I'm a beautiful brunette fema
single Jewish professional from northe
NJ, 36, seeking sincere, handsome, inte
ligent, single Jewish professional male f
serious relationship. Phone/photo. 5922 ✉

Jersey Man—39-year-old electrician fro
north Jersey. Athletic, friendly, carin
great sense of humor, considered han
some, and well-liked by others. Enjo
sports, exercise, dining and being arou
others, along with quiet evenings at hom
Looking for same in female, for fu
romance, maybe more. Note/photo. 5945✉

Divorced White Male—38, ve
attractive, 6'1", professional. Athlet
build. Interests include all types
music - especially classical, theate
tennis and travel. Seeks slender, attra
tive, divorced or single white femal
28-42, with similar interests. 5943 ✉

European Lady—Pretty, professiona
slender, seeking a man, 40-58. 5909 ✉

Great Cook In Northern NJ—Smar
Jewish, very pretty, fit, 40, fun, affe
tionate. You're an educated male, fina
cially successful, kind, romanti
funny, nonsmoker, marriage-minded
Note and recent photo, please. 5968✉

Perfect Combination—Of Carri
Samantha, Miranda and Charlotte. 29
year-old, really cool, attractive and fu
Jewish MBA looking for a real guy's gu
29-35. You're good-looking, successfu
entertaining and selective. Let's mee
for cocktails. Note/photo, please. 5927✉

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ngle Jewish Man, 39—Tall, husky, ure artist and investor, well-read, easy-ing, with good sense of humor, passion- and a bit offbeat. Seeks attractive male, 25-37, for fun, friendship, romance d hopefully more. Meet NYC, north and uth Jersey, or Philadelphia areas. Note/ oto and phone number, please. 5960✉

My Final Answer—30-something, rgeous green-eyed blond menschette, oking for the real thing. Please, no nall kids or cats. 5906 ✉ ☎

ophisticated, Shapely, Gentle—errific athlete, excellent physical shape, ry attractive, well-educated, cultured, ell-traveled, stylish, tall Jewish lady - eking kind, cosmopolitan, successful ntleman, 45-57. 4.0 tennis player/avid ier is a plus. Honesty/sincerity/kindness your real advantage. 5948 ✉ ☎

avoir-Faire—A spirit of adventure, im, good figure and great legs. Pretty, atural chestnut blond, 5'7". Positive bout life, smart, fun-loving. Thinks eatively. Independent and compassionate easy to be with. European background; peaks some French/Spanish. Loves avel, art, dancing, Cole Porter, nging, yoga, unexpected pleasures of ving in NY. Appreciates good taste, onesty, diversity. Seeks bright, asonably fit, open-minded and kind, vely, affectionate, nonsmoking man, 5-70s. Sgo17@webtv.net 5944 ✉

nternational Real Estate Investor—oung 50s, good-looking, sexy, with reat personality and sense of humor, oking for a beautiful, sensual and phisticated woman, 30-45, to be a best iend and to enjoy together the best of Y and the world. Let's give it a chance. hoto, please. 5905 ✉

Am A Woman Who Loves—The sea... ola novels...wonderful food...laughter... ahler, Monk, Mick....surprises... am tall, attractive, smart, fit. Are you man, 50 plus, 6' plus, and possibly f like mind? 5911 ✉☎

D - Attractive, Charming—With nterests in music, theater, movies, kiing, sailing... Looking for an educated, ind man, 38-50. 5919 ✉

lassy, Pretty—Slim, bright Great Neck dy, varied interests, seeks gentleman of ntellect and sensitivity, 68-75. 5914 ✉

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Warm, Pretty, Upbeat—Active female, nature lover, seeks tall, secure, fit, 52-62-year-old man of action, with sense of humor - to share travels, dreams and all the city offers. Come dance with me. Note/photo. 5946 ✉

Intelligence, Integrity, Individualism—Jewish Jersey male, 46, PhD student in social work (lawyer in "former" life), seeks bright, funny, caring, down-to-earth Jewish woman. I am passionate about life and compassionate about people. I enjoy giving more than receiving, and seek a companion on life's pathway. My interests include spectator sports, reading, bridge, theater and rock-n-roll. I believe who I am with is far more important than what I am doing. Communication and sharing are essential in my life. 5907✉☎

Home For Holidays?—Metaphysical sense, as in where the heart is. Me: fit 6'2", slim, don't-look-it 53, writer, no kids, distinctive sensibility, seeks woman of insights, 40s, smart, nonsmoker, svelte, good voice, in NYC or elsewhere. To have it said, made for each other. 5925 ✉☎

Petite Female Wanted—Single white male, 36, MA degree, physically fit, athletic, seeks intelligent, active, slim white female, 27-37. 5930 ✉☎

Healthy, Wealthy, Wise—Handsome, athletic Jewish guy seeks bright lady, 36-44, wanting marriage, children very soon. Career lady such as MD, PhD, JD, etc., is fine. Beautiful or plain also okay. Great at stock market and also tenured professor in NYC. yyyj@aol.com 5915✉☎

Sexy And Smart—5'5" redhead with green eyes, fit, slender and elegant. Loves the outdoors and has a lust for life. Carefully seeking a 36-45-year-old, single, intelligent, handsome and successful man to share desires and dreams. There will be magic moments and moderate madness in store for us. Note or phone and photo, please. 5903 ✉☎

A Knockout—Simply stunning, slim blond with poise, a certain elegance, pizzazz and great legs. Successful yet easygoing Renaissance woman. Dabbles in skiing, has run marathons. Loves learning, surprises, relaxing in the Caribbean, dancing, the sublime to the ridiculous, rock-and-roll, football, basketball, Picasso, just having fun. Seeks educated, physically fit, financially stable, flexible, attractive man (45-65) who would appreciate a well-educated, self-assured, caring woman. Mnich68999@aol.com 5959 ✉☎

Reply And Win A Prize—I am a fit, funny, smart, handsome, successful, romantic 53-year-old. I enjoy the theater, movies, cooking, great (and not so great) wine, travel, long walks, the beach, cuddling and all that this wonderful life has to offer. I seek a great lady who is smart, sexy, attractive, with a sense of humor, a passion for life and a yearning for love and romance. Note/photo, please. 5920 ✉

Charming And Humorous—Christian male - 39, MBA, entrepreneur; loves family, holding hands, laughter and creative thinking. Seeks slim, educated woman, 25-35, never married. Photo please. 5928✉

Pretty Widow—Full of life and love, wishes to meet fine Jewish gentleman, 60s-70s, with a twinkle in his eye and a spring in his step. 5904 ✉☎

Scandinavian Blond Good Looks—Tall, toned, slim with long legs and a great smile. Elegant, striking, fun-loving, successful professional, 40-something. Sociable, independent, international, interested in people. Open and honest, with dry humor, a little offbeat. Unwinds with sailing (St. Thomas to Lisbon) and hiking (Burgundy, Dordogne and Norway). Likes running (especially when finished), New Yorker cartoons, Tina Turner, Clapton, Chopin, art, northern Scotland, St. Bart's, biking. Seeks educated, attractive, in-shape professional man, 5'10" plus, 45-58. A good sense of humor makes all the difference. norsk@mymailstation.com 5958 ✉☎

Statuesque, Curvaceous—5'9", very pretty Jewish female, radiant smile, short blond hair "a la Sharon Stone", accomplished, down-to-earth; likes boxing matches, comedy clubs, black-tie events. Seeks well-established, financially successful, honest man, 40-58, with high morals, interested in commitment. 5964✉☎

Attractive Artist—Blue eyes, dark hair, 5'7", good sense of humor, loves music. Seeks classy man, 35-45, handsome inside and out - like the arts, witty, wise and well-built. 5962 ✉

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Very Nice, Attractive Japanese Lady—Intelligent, young 30s, Upper East Sider, warm, relaxed, unique, world-traveled, traditional about romance - loves music, dining out, boating, ballet. Seeks right, successful "single gentleman" (sincere, caring, family-minded, generous, well-educated, pro-job, fit, no smoke/drugs, financially secure) for happy marriage, "forever". MD, MBA, boating a plus. DOB/photo. POB 390, NY, NY 10028

Forever?—Caring, friendly, educated, single Jewish female, 37, financially secure, never-married, slim, 5'4", attractive, brown-eyed brunette with various interests and a gentle and warm heart, seeks a handsome, kind, compassionate, sincere, easygoing, professional, single Jewish male, nonsmoker, 35-43, to share a special relationship...and the sweetest dream. Note and photo, please. 5936 ✉

Let's Do Lunch!—Pretty, petite, 37, Jewish marketing exec (who looks great in jeans), seeks down-to-earth, intelligent male, 35-45. Note/photo. 5954 ✉

Unassuming, Low-Key Professional—Man, tall, Jewish, 60s, seeks youngish, tall, brainy/brawny, robust lady. 5923 ✉☎

Seeking Hairy Woman—This single white male - 42-year-old, handsome professional, financially secure, well-traveled, who enjoys the best that life has to offer, seeks a single female, 30s-40s, who is natural-looking, with extensive body hair. Seeking a partner to share new adventures, traveling and possible long-term relationship. Photo/note/phone. 5918 ✉

Smart, Shapely Lady—58, seeks unique man, 48-57, as soul mate. 5965 ✉☎

Pretty, Petite, Professional—Mom, 41 (of adorable, loving twin boys), 5'3", 117, fit, sparkling blue eyes, a big heart, warm smile, with sense of humor and zest for life. I love cooking, family life, music, dining out, travel (family/romantic getaways). I seek a partner, 40-49, nonsmoker, who is handsome, professional, financially secure, with similar interests, who desires a committed, loving relationship. Loving dads welcome. Note/photo, please. 5952 ✉☎

Gay Woman—(212), 40ish, pretty, hip, smart, upscale, eclectic, seeks warm, fun, feminine friend. galpalny@aol 5908✉☎

Attractive Educator—Male, 54, fit, likes outdoors. Seeks Christian female, 30s-45. Note/photo. POB 3074, Mt. Vernon, NY 10553

Successful Businessman—50s, handsome, fit and sophisticated, in search of an attractive woman to enjoy life and develop a sincere relationship. Photo, please. 5910 ✉

Successful But Humble!—Handsome, accomplished, fit, Jewish, 45. Loves to dance - especially salsa, merengue. Sports/clinical psychologist with charm, integrity. Seeks pretty, slender lady, 28-46, with compassion, passion, for best friend, lover for life. Note/photo/phone. 5966 ✉☎

Sarcastically Funny—Jewish attorney, 40, 6'4", athletic, with diverse interests, pokes fun at almost everything, himself included. Seeks sassy, bright, open-minded, attractively fit, family-minded female, 28-40. Call/note/photo. 5963 ✉☎

Boston—Author, academic, media commentator. This lovely, elegant, sensual, slender, divorced white Jewish female seeks her counterpart: an attractive, vibrant, emotionally and financially secure man (45 plus) with a gift for intimacy and a lust for life. E-mail with photo to: eb7000@hotmail or note/photo: 5885✉

Attorney, 60s—Considered good-looking, trim, athletic, seeks an attractive and audacious lady. Photo/phone. 5929✉

Unique Millionaire—Self-made, street-smart entrepreneur - intelligent, ambitious, 59 going on 39, 6'3", 230, seeks sexy soul mate - real woman with a great figure, 30-45. Photo. 5938 ✉

Handsome Jewish MD—55, loves life, is warm, affectionate and witty, seeks attractive, Jewish, Latin or Italian, classy lady, 40-49, to bring out the best in each other. Note/photo, please. 5940 ✉

Handsome Dentist—45, white Christi male, never married, 6', athletic, seeks pre ty female under 40 for marriage. 5916✉☎

Pretty, Educated Russian Lady—See nice, honest man, 55-65 - friendshi romance. Write: POB 909, NY, NY 10156

Great Woman—(Got herpes) - attractiv lively, artist/teacher, seeks gent, 44-58, f love/life. 5912 ✉

Sexy, Pretty And Fun!—Asian, youn looking 38, athletic, designer, creativ spontaneous, independent, adventuro spirit and young at heart. Loves the ocea horses and laughing. Seeking my tru partner in life - that special, fun-lovin athletic and handsome guy with integrit charm, lots of wit and a great smil Photo, please. 5951 ✉

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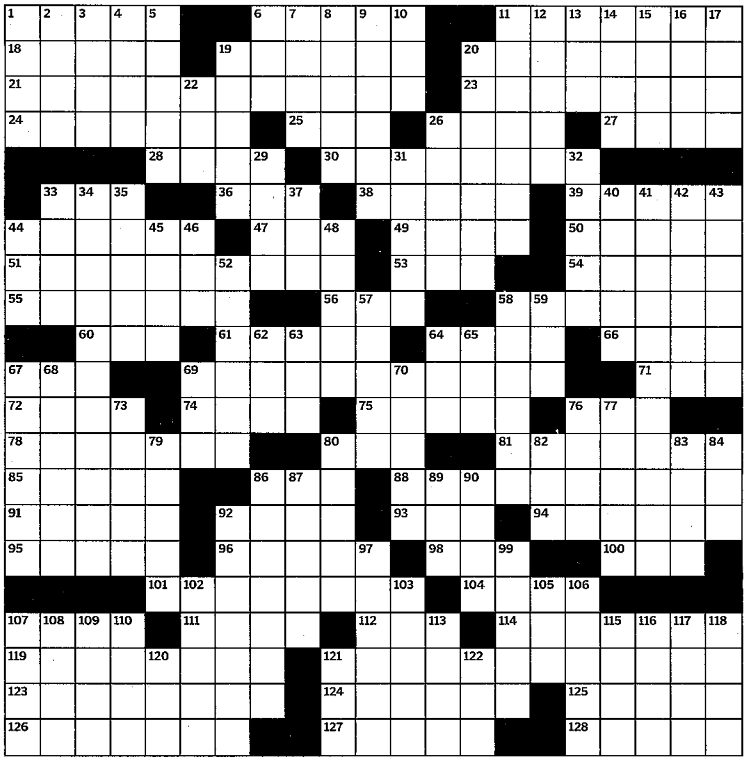
'Offbeat Composers'

'Cue' Crossword by Maura B. Jacobson



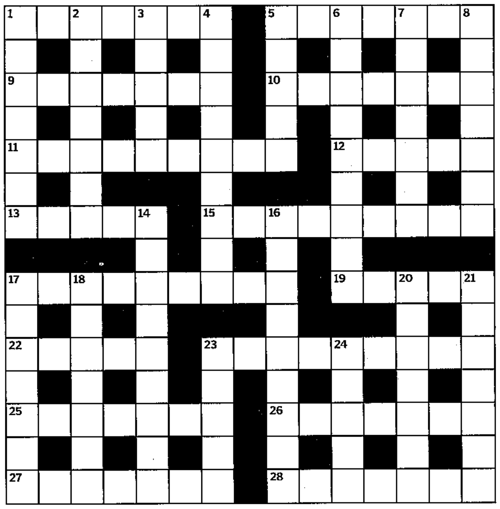
ACROSS

1 "Till the —— Time"
6 Turkish honcho
11 Brief operatic song
18 Furlough
19 Flinches
20 Opposite of inclusion
21 Annoying buzzes?
23 Position of lesser importance?
24 Lace city of France
25 "Right you ——!"
26 Engage, as gears
27 Bettor's consideration
28 Barbara's longtime "20/20" co-host
30 Signed as payee
33 Elec. unit
36 Have a late meal
38 As —— (usually)
39 Moral principle
44 Polite request word
47 Neckwear for 29-Down
49 Flea-market disclaimer
50 Dalai Lama's capital
51 Bicycle features?
53 He's a doll
54 Cry to Macduff
55 Habitat scene in a museum
56 "Thar —— blows!"
58 In a mild way
60 Yardage for a first down
61 Binge
64 Luigi's "Hi!"
66 Within: prefix
67 Foldaway bed
69 Marketing aid?
71 Col.'s superior
72 Author Ludwig
74 Steersman's place
75 Ranch in Ferber's "Giant"
76 Selfish kind of trip
78 Removes from power
80 Needle aperture
81 Loss of memory
85 They get invited first
86 Many a Little League coach
88 Arrival at a destination?
91 Fleming of the Met
92 Round before the final
93 Jinx
94 Horse operas
95 Cubic meter
96 Eocene, for one
98 Pinch off
100 Duke Ellington's monogram
101 Part of P.G.
104 Muscle resiliency
107 St. Louis bridge
111 Fiancée's acquisition
112 Afternoon social
114 Straight through, as a flight
119 Zeus?
121 Fearsome weapons?
123 Resplendent
124 Unruffled
125 Gulf Arab
126 Frozen desserts, at Maxim's
127 Practical joke, e.g.
128 Babbitt's creator

DOWN

1 Exile island
2 One of the Simons
3 Befuddled condition
4 Microwave
5 Command to Rover
6 Ham on the hoof
7 Fictional Christie
8 Strike fear into
9 Capital of Montana
10 Donkey's uncle
11 Accumulates
12 Nouveau ——
13 Kabibble of radio days
14 Exxon, formerly
15 Evened the score
16 Frog's relative
17 Aardvark's diet
19 First Oscar film
20 Ohio campus
22 Fraction of a franc
26 Computer scooter
29 Wahine's dance
31 Donald Duck is one
32 Reese of "Touched by an Angel"
33 Jai-——
34 Furniture wood?
35 Chaplain, to a G.I.
37 For each
40 Scottish baron
41 Kids' game?
42 Tristan's love
43 Western gorge
44 Prof.'s degree
45 Lennon son
46 Arboreal street name
48 Japanese emigré
52 Shindigs
57 O. or Patrick
58 Mideast market
59 Realtor's sale
62 Tammany worker, for short
63 Rotation speed: abbr.
64 Spy guys' org.
65 Instrument-player suffix
67 Lebanon trees
68 Brunch offering
69 Ernesto Guevara
70 Bloodsucker
73 Also-ran
76 One-named New Age singe
77 "Beau ——"
79 Hard to climb
80 Decree
82 Phone-button 6
83 As to
84 Most junk mail
86 Is contingent (on)
87 Intermingled with
89 Buddhism offshoot
90 Way out
92 Not frivolous
97 Alice's mad acquaintance
99 Puerto Rican port
102 Shoptalk
103 Actress Dana
105 San Francisco hill
106 Take out membership
107 Caviar, basically
108 Younger Guthrie
109 Saint Laurent's mentor
110 Belgrade native
113 Last word of the Bible
115 No different
116 Defrost
117 Discontinued Dodge
118 Before omegas
120 Donate, in Dundee
121 Cleo's snake
122 Pen dip

The 'Guardian' Crossword Set by Crispa



ACROSS

1 Overwrought, though that's no longer mentioned. (7)
5 Seeing a sailor among others make a new beginning. (7)
9 This could be great as a means to disperse rioters. (4,3)
10 Porter taking in mail for a preacher. (7)
11 A game hardly worth a mention? (9)
12 Digs up explosive devices. (5)
13 Voiced hesitation, right or wrong. (5)
15 Confirm when definite. (9)
17 Men at work on the exterior of some flat. (9)
19 Put in reverse by a guy getting angry. (3,2)
22 Oblivion of a member with no following. (5)
23 Mark measurements for construction of tail brace. (9)
25 Time to dress? Rubbish! (7)
26 Point to the left extremity. (7)
27 The river turned colour and then disappeared. (7)
28 Person refusing to employ a Continental prohibitionist? (3-4)

DOWN

1 Note added to a list for consumers. (7)
2 He may fill up one's glass, but wants payment. (7)
3 Quite impervious and decidedly mean. (5)
4 The underworld boss coppers let out appears put out. (9)
5 A bit of a spitfire—a debunking writer. (5)
6 Owls hatched early in the year make only gradual progress. (4,5)
7 Before a woman erected the aerial. (7)
8 Double-dealing and unreliable senator. (7)
14 "Quota," a French article showing good sense. (9)
16 Stock limitation. (6,3)
17 A pupil given guidance about, for example, being maintained. (7)
18 A lover who is unhappily married. (7)
20 Goes to find a music man in back street. (7
21 She's appealing—so quiet and superior. (7)
23 Many went for a break. (5)
24 Continue to exclude the peer. (5)

Solutions to last week's puzzles appear on page 94

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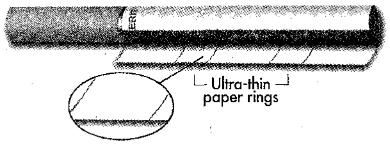

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